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ROKEBY;

A POEM.

BY

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

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1813.

TO

JOHN B. S. MORRITT, Esq.

THIS POEM,

THE SCENE OF WHICH IS LAID IN HIS BEAUTIFUL DEMESNE

OF ROKEBY,

IS INSCRIBED,

IN TOKEN OF SINCERE FRIENDSHIP,

BY

WALTER SCOTT.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The Scene of this Poem is laid at Rokeby, near Greta-Bridge, in Yorkshire, and shifts to the adjacent fortress of Barnard-Castle, and to other places in that vicinity.

The Time occupied by the Action is a space of Five Days, three of which are supposed to elapse between the end of the Fifth and beginning of the Sixth Canto.

The date of the supposed events is immediately subsequent to the great Battle of Marston-Moor, 3d July, 1644. *This period of public confusion has been chosen, without any purpose of combining the Fable with the Military or Political Events of the Civil War, but only as affording a degree of probability to the Fictitious Narrative now presented to the Public.*

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ROKEBY.

CANTO FIRST.

THE Moon is in her summer glow,
But hoarse and high the breezes blow,
And, racking o'er her face, the cloud
Varies the tincture of her shroud;
On Barnard's towers, and Tees's stream,
She changes as a guilty dream,
When Conscience, with remorse and fear,
Goads sleeping Fancy's wild career.

Her light seem'd now the blush of shame,
Seem'd now fierce anger's darker flame,
Shifting that shade to come and go,
Like apprehension's hurried glow;
Then sorrow's livery dims the air,
And dies in darkness, like despair.
Such varied hues the warder sees
Reflected from the woodland Tees,
Then from old Baliol's tower looks forth,
Sees the clouds mustering in the north,
Hears, upon turret-roof and wall,
By fits the plashing rain-drop fall,
Lists to the breeze's boding sound,
And wraps his shaggy mantle round.

II.

Those towers, which in the changeful gleam
Throw murky shadows on the stream,

These towers of Barnard hold a guest,
The emotions of whose troubled breast,
In wild and strange confusion driven,
Rival the flitting rack of heaven.
Ere sleep stern OSWALD's senses tied,
Oft had he changed his weary side,
Composed his limbs, and vainly sought
By effort strong to banish thought.
Sleep came at length, but with a train
Of feelings real and fancies vain,
Mingling, in wild disorder cast,
The expected future with the past.
Conscience, anticipating time,
Already rues the unacted crime,
And calls her furies forth, to shake
The sounding scourge and hissing snake;
While her poor victim's outward throes
Bear witness to his mental woes,

And shew what lesson may be read
Beside a sinner's restless bed.

III.

Thus Oswald's labouring feelings trace
Strange changes in his sleeping face,
Rapid and ominous as these
With which the moon-beams tinge the Tees.
There might be seen of shame the blush,
There anger's dark and fiercer flush,
While the perturbed sleeper's hand
Seem'd grasping dagger-knife, or brand.
Relax'd that grasp, the heavy sigh,
The tear in the half-opening eye,
The pallid cheek and brow, confessed
That grief was busy in his breast;
Nor paused that mood—a sudden start
Impelled the life-blood from the heart;

Features convulsed, and mutterings dread,
Show terror reigns in sorrow's stead;
That pang the painful slumber broke,
And Oswald with a start awoke.

IV.

He woke, and feared again to close
His eye-lids in such dire repose;
He woke,—to watch the lamp, and tell
From hour to hour the castle-bell,
Or listen to the owlet's cry,
Or the sad breeze that whistles by,
Or catch, by fits, the tuneless rhyme
With which the warder cheats the time,
And envying think, how, when the sun
Bids the poor soldier's watch be done,
Couch'd on his straw, and fancy-free,
He sleeps like careless infancy.

V.

Far town-ward sounds a distant tread,
And Oswald, starting from his bed,
Hath caught it, though no human ear,
Unsharpen'd by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank,
Until it reached the castle-bank.
Now nigh and plain the sound appears,
The warder's challenge now he hears,
Then clanking chains and levers tell,
That o'er the moat the draw-bridge fell,
And, in the castle-court below,
Voices are heard, and torches glow,
As marshalling the stranger's way
Straight for the room where Oswald lay;
The cry was,—" Tidings from the host,
Of weight—a messenger comes post."—

Stifling the tumult of his breast,
His answer Oswald thus expressed—
"Bring food and wine, and trim the fire;
Admit the stranger, and retire."—

VI.

The stranger came with heavy stride,
The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff coat, in ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.
Full slender answer deigned he
To Oswald's anxious courtesy,
But marked, by a disdainful smile,
He saw and scorned the petty wile,
When Oswald changed the torch's place,
Anxious that on the soldier's face
Its partial lustre might be thrown,
To shew his looks, yet hide his own.

His guest, the while, laid slow aside
The ponderous cloak of tough bull's hide,
And to the torch glanced broad and clear
The corslet of a cuirassier;
Then from his brows the casque he drew,
And from the dank plume dashed the dew,
From gloves of mail relieved his hands,
And spread them to the kindling brands,
And, turning to the genial board,
Without a health, or pledge, or word
Of meet and social reverence said,
Deeply he drank, and fiercely fed;
As free from ceremony's sway,
As famished wolf that tears his prey.

VII.

With deep impatience, tinged with fear,
His host beheld him gorge his cheer,

And quaff the full carouze that lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment.
Now Oswald stood a space aside,
Now paced the room with hasty stride,
In feverish agony to learn
Tidings of deep and dread concern,
Cursing each moment that his guest
Protracted o'er his ruffian feast.
Yet, viewing with alarm, at last,
The end of that uncouth repast,
Almost he seemed their haste to rue,
As, at his sign, his train withdrew,
And left him with the stranger, free
To question of his mystery.
Then did his silence long proclaim
A struggle between fear and shame.

VIII.

Much in the stranger's mien appears,
To justify suspicious fears.
On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time,
Roughened the brow, the temples bared,
And sable hairs with silver shared,
Yet left—what age alone could tame—
The lip of pride, the eye of flame,
The full-drawn lip that upward curled,
The eye, that seemed to scorn the world.
That lip had terror never blanched;
Ne'er in that eye had tear-drop quenched
The flash severe of swarthy glow,
That mocked at pain, and knew not woe;
Inured to danger's direst form,
Tornade and earthquake, flood and storm,

Death had he seen by sudden blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures slow,
By mine or breach, by steel or ball,
Knew all his shapes, and scorned them all.

IX.

But yet, though BERTRAM's hardened look,
Unmoved, could blood and danger brook,
Still worse than apathy had place
On his swart brow and callous face;
For evil passions, cherished long,
Had ploughed them with impressions strong.
All that gives gloss to sin, all gay
Light folly, past with youth away,
But rooted stood, in manhood's hour,
The weeds of vice without their flower.
And yet the soil in which they grew,
Had it been tamed when life was new,

Had depth and vigour to bring forth
The hardier fruits of virtuous worth.
Not that, e'en then, his heart had known
The gentler feelings' kindly tone;
But lavish waste had been refined
To bounty in his chastened mind,
And lust of gold, that waste to feed,
Been lost in love of glory's meed,
And, frantic then no more, his pride
Had ta'en fair virtue for its guide.

X.

Even now, by conscience unrestrained,
Clogged by gross vice, by slaughter stained,
Still knew his daring soul to soar,
And mastery o'er the mind he bore;
For meaner guilt, or heart less hard,
Quailed beneath Bertram's bold regard.

And this felt Oswald, while in vain
He strove, by many a winding train,
To lure his sullen guest to show,
Unasked, the news he longed to know,
While on far other subject hung
His heart, than faultered from his tongue.
Yet nought for that his guest did deign
To note or spare his secret pain,
But still, in stern and stubborn sort,
Returned him answer dark and short,
Or started from the theme, to range
In loose digression wild and strange,
And forced the embarrassed host to buy,
By query close, direct reply.

XI.

Awhile he glozed upon the cause
Of Commons, Covenant, and Laws,

And Church reformed—but felt rebuke
Beneath grim Bertram's sneering look.
Then stammered—" Has a field been fought?
Has Bertram news of battle brought?
For sure a soldier, famed so far
In foreign fields for feats of war,
On eve of fight ne'er left the host,
Until the field were won or lost."—
" Here, in your towers by circling Tees,
You, Oswald Wycliff, rest at ease;
Why deem it strange that others come
To share such safe and easy home,
From fields where danger, death, and toil,
Are the reward of civil broil?"—
—" Nay, mock not, friend!—since well we know
The near advances of the foe,
To mar our northern army's work,
Encamped before beleaguered York;

Thy horse with valiant Fairfax lay,
And must have fought—how went the day?"

XII.

"Wouldst hear the tale?—On Marston heath
Met, front to front, the ranks of death;
Flourished the trumpets fierce, and now
Fired was each eye, and flushed each brow;
On either side loud clamours ring,
'God and the Cause!—God and the King!'
Right English all, they rushed to blows,
With nought to win, and all to lose.
I could have laughed—but lacked the time—
To see, in phrenesy sublime,
How the fierce zealots fought and bled,
For king or state, as humour led;
Some for a dream of public good,
Some for church-tippet, gown, and hood,

Draining their veins, in death to claim
A patriot's or a martyr's name.—
Led Bertram Risingham the hearts,
That countered there on adverse parts,
No superstitious fool had I
Sought El Dorados in the sky!
Chili had heard me through her states,
And Lima oped her silver gates,
Rich Mexico I had marched through,
And sacked the splendours of Peru,
Till sunk Pizarro's daring name,
And, Cortez, thine, in Bertram's fame."
—"Still from the purpose wilt thou stray!
Good gentle friend, how went the day?"

XIII.

—"Good am I deemed at trumpet-sound,
And good where goblets dance the round,

Though gentle ne'er was joined, till now,
With rugged Bertram's breast and brow.—
But I resume. The battle's rage
Was like the strife which currents wage,
Where Orinoco, in his pride,
Rolls to the main no tribute tide,
But 'gainst broad ocean urges far
A rival sea of roaring war;
While, in ten thousand eddies driven,
The billows fling their foam to heaven,
And the pale pilot seeks in vain,
Where rolls the river, where the main.
Even thus, upon the bloody field,
The eddying tides of conflict wheeled
Ambiguous, till that heart of flame,
Hot Rupert, on our squadrons came,
Hurling against our spears a line
Of gallants, fiery as their wine;

Then ours, though stubborn in their zeal,
In zeal's despite began to reel.
What wouldst thou more?—in tumult tost,
Our leaders fell, our ranks were lost.
A thousand men, who drew the sword
For both the Houses and the Word,
Preached forth from hamlet, grange, and down,
To curb the crosier and the crown,
Now, stark and stiff, lie stretched in gore,
And ne'er shall rail at mitre more.—
Thus fared it, when I left the fight,
With the good Cause and Commons' right."—

XIV.

"Disastrous news!" dark Wycliffe said;
Assumed despondence bent his head,
While troubled joy was in his eye,
The well-feigned sorrow to belie.—

"Disastrous news!—when needed most,
Told ye not that your chiefs were lost?—
Complete the woeful tale, and say,
Who fell upon that fatal day;
What leaders of repute and name
Bought by their death a deathless fame.
If such my direst foeman's doom,
My tears shall dew his honoured tomb.—
No answer?—Friend, of all our host
Thou knowest whom I should hate the most;
Whom thou too once were wont to hate,
Yet leavest me doubtful of his fate."—
With look unmoved,—"Of friend or foe,
Aught," answered Bertram, "wouldst thou know,
Demand in simple terms and plain,
A soldier's answer shalt thou gain;
For question dark, or riddle high,
I have nor judgment nor reply."

XV.

The wrath his art and fear suppressed,
Now blazed at once in Wycliffe's breast;
And brave from man so meanly born,
Roused his hereditary scorn.
—" Wretch! hast thou paid thy bloody debt?
PHILIP of MORTHAM, lives he yet?
False to thy patron or thine oath,
Trait'rous or perjured, one or both,
Slave! hast thou kept thy promise plight,
To slay thy leader in the fight?"—
Then from his seat the soldier sprung,
And Wycliffe's hand he strongly wrung;
His grasp, as hard as glove of mail,
Forced the red blood-drop from the nail—
" A health!" he cried; and, ere he quaffed,
Flung from him Wycliffe's hand, and laughed,

—" Now, Oswald Wycliffe, speaks thy heart !
Now playest thou well thy genuine part !
Worthy, but for thy craven fear,
Like me to roam a buccaneer.
What reck'st thou of the Cause divine,
If Mortham's wealth and lands be thine ?
What carest thou for beleaguered York,
If this good hand have done its work ?
Or what though Fairfax and his best
Are reddening Marston's swarthy breast,
If Philip Mortham with them lie,
Lending his life-blood to the dye ?—
Sit then ! and as mid comrades free
Carousing after victory,
When tales are told of blood and fear,
That boys and women shrink to hear,
From point to point I frankly tell
The deed of death as it befell.

XVI.

" When purposed vengeance I forego,
Term me a wretch, nor deem me foe;
And when an insult I forgive,
Then brand me as a slave, and live !—
Philip of Mortham is with those
Whom Bertram Risingham calls foes;
Or whom more sure revenge attends,
If numbered with ungrateful friends.
As was his wont, ere battle glowed,
Along the marshalled ranks he rode,
And wore his vizor up the while.
I saw his melancholy smile,
When, full opposed in front, he knew
Where ROKEBY's kindred banner flew.
" And thus," he said, " will friends divide !"—
I heard, and thought how, side by side,
We two had turned the battle's tide,

In many a well-debated field,
Where Bertram's breast was Philip's shield.
I thought on Darien's desarts pale,
Where death bestrides the evening gale,
How o'er my friend my cloak I threw,
And fenceless faced the deadly dew;
I thought on Quariana's cliff,
Where, rescued from our foundering skiff,
Through the white breakers' wrath I bore
Exhausted Mortham to the shore;
And when his side an arrow found,
I sucked the Indian's venomed wound.
These thoughts like torrents rushed along,
To sweep away my purpose strong.

XVII.

" Hearts are not flint, and flints are rent;
Hearts are not steel, and steel is bent.

When Mortham bade me, as of yore,
Be near him in the battle's roar,
I scarcely saw the spears laid low,
I scarcely heard the trumpets blow;
Lost was the war in inward strife,
Debating Mortham's death or life.
'Twas then I thought, how, lured to come
As partner of his wealth and home,
Years of piratic wandering o'er,
With him I sought our native shore.
But Mortham's lord grew far estranged
From the bold heart with whom he ranged;
Doubts, horrors, superstitious fears,
Saddened and dimmed descending years;
The wily priests their victim sought,
And damned each free-born deed and thought.
Then must I seek another home,
My license shook his sober dome;

If gold he gave, in one wild day
I revelled thrice the sum away.
An idle outcast then I strayed,
Unfit for tillage or for trade,
Deemed, like the steel of rusted lance,
Useless and dangerous at once.
The women feared my hardy look,
At my approach the peaceful shook;
The merchant saw my glance of flame,
And locked his hoards when Bertram came;
Each child of coward peace kept far
From the neglected son of war.

XVIII.

" But civil discord gave the call,
And made my trade the trade of all.
By Mortham urged, I came again
His vassals to the fight to train.

What guerdon waited on my care?
I could not cant of creed or prayer;
Sour fanatics each trust obtained,
And I, dishonoured and disdained,
Gained but the high and happy lot,
In these poor arms to front the shot!—
All this thou know'st, thy gestures tell;
Yet hear it o'er, and mark it well.
'Tis honour bids me now relate
Each circumstance of Mortham's fate.

XIX.

"Thoughts, from the tongue that slowly part,
Glance quick as lightning through the heart.
As my spur pressed my courser's side,
Philip of Mortham's cause was tried,
And, ere the charging squadrons mixed,
His plea was cast, his doom was fixed.

I watched him through the doubtful fray,
That changed as March's moody day,
Till, like a stream that bursts its bank,
Fierce Rupert thundered on our flank.
'Twas then, midst tumult, smoke, and strife,
Where each man fought for death or life,
'Twas then I fired my petronel,
And Mortham, steed and rider, fell.
One dying look he upward cast,
Of wrath and anguish—'twas his last.
Think not that there I stopped to view
What of the battle should ensue;
But ere I cleared that bloody press,
Our northern horse ran masterless;
Monckton and Mitton told the news,
How troops of Roundheads choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward, past,

Cursing the day when zeal or meed
First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed.
Yet when I reached the banks of Swale,
Had rumour learned another tale;
With his barbed horse, fresh tidings say
Stout Cromwell has redeemed the day:
But whether false the news, or true,
Oswald, I reck as light as you."—

XX.

Not then by Wycliffe might be shown,
How his pride startled at the tone
In which his complice, fierce and free,
Asserted guilt's equality.
In smoothest terms his speech he wove,
Of endless friendship, faith, and love;
Promised and vowed in courteous sort,
But Bertram broke professions short.

"Wycliffe, be sure not here I stay,
No, scarcely till the rising day;
Warned by the legends of my youth,
I trust not an associate's truth.
Do not my native dales prolong
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Trained forward to his bloody fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous Hall?
Oft, by the Pringle's haunted side,
The shepherd sees his spectre glide.
And near the spot that gave me name,
The moated mound of Risingham,
Where Reed upon her margin sees
Sweet Woodburn's cottages and trees,
Some ancient sculptor's art has shown
An outlaw's image on the stone;
Unmatched in strength, a giant he,
With quivered back, and kirtled knee.

Ask how he died, that hunter bold,
The tameless monarch of the wold,
And age and infancy can tell,
By brother's treachery he fell.—
Thus warned by legends of my youth,
I trust to no associate's truth.

XXI.

" When last we reasoned of this deed,
Nought, I bethink me, was agreed,
Or by what rule, or when, or where,
The wealth of Mortham we should share;
Then list, while I the portion name,
Our differing laws give each to claim.
Thou, vassal sworn to England's throne,
Her rules of heritage must own;
They deal thee, as to nearest heir,
Thy kinsman's lands and livings fair,

And these I yield :—do thou revere
The statutes of the buccaneer.
Friend to the sea, and foeman sworn
To all that on her waves are borne,
When falls a mate in battle broil,
His comrade heirs his portioned spoil;
When dies in fight a daring foe,
He claims his wealth who struck the blow;
And either rule to me assigns
Those spoils of Indian seas and mines,
Hoarded in Mortham's caverns dark,
Ingot of gold and diamond spark,
Chalice and plate from churches borne,
And gems from shrieking beauty torn,
Each string of pearl, each silver bar,
And all the wealth of western war;
I go to search, where, dark and deep,
Those trans-atlantic treasures sleep.

Thou must along—for, lacking thee,
The heir will scarce find entrance free;
And then farewell. I haste to try
Each varied pleasure wealth can buy;
When cloyed each wish, these wars afford
Fresh work for Bertram's restless sword."—

XXII.

An undecided answer hung
On Oswald's hesitating tongue.
Despite his craft, he heard with awe
This ruffian stabber fix the law;
While his own troubled passions veer
Through hatred, joy, regret, and fear;—
Joyed at the soul that Bertram flies,
He grudged the murderer's mighty prize,
Hated his pride's presumptuous tone,
And feared to wend with him alone.

At length, that middle course to steer,
To cowardice and craft so dear,
"His charge," he said, "would ill allow
His absence from the fortress now;
Wilfrid on Bertram should attend,
His son should journey with his friend."—

XXIII.

Contempt kept Bertram's anger down,
And wreathed to savage smile his frown.
"Wilfrid, or thou—'tis one to me,
Which ever bears the golden key.
Yet think not but I mark, and smile
To mark thy poor and selfish wile!
If injury from me you fear,
What, Oswald Wycliffe, shields thee here?
I've sprung from walls more high than these,
I've swam through deeper streams than Tees.

Might I not stab thee, ere one yell
Could rouse the distant centinel?
Start not—it is not my design,
But, if it were, weak fence were thine;
And, trust me, that, in time of need,
This hand hath done more desperate deed.—
Go, haste and rouse thy slumbering son;
Time calls, and I must needs be gone."—

XXIV.

Nought of his sire's ungenerous part
Polluted Wilfrid's gentle heart;
A heart, too soft from early life
To hold with fortune needful strife.
His sire, while yet a hardier race
Of numerous sons were Wycliffe's grace,
On Wilfrid set contemptuous brand,
For feeble heart and forceless hand;

But a fond mother's care and joy
Were center'd in her sickly boy.
No touch of childhood's frolic mood
Shewed the elastic spring of blood;
Hour after hour he loved to pore
On Shakspeare's rich and varied lore,
But turned from martial scenes and light,
From Falstaff's feast and Percy's fight,
To ponder Jaques' moral strain,
And muse with Hamlet, wise in vain;
And weep himself to soft repose
O'er gentle Desdemona's woes.

XXV.

In youth, he sought not pleasures found
By youth in horse, and hawk, and hound,
But loved the quiet joys that wake
By lonely stream and silent lake;

In Deepdale's solitude to lie,
Where all is cliff, and copse, and sky;
To climb Catcastle's dizzy peak,
Or lone Pendragon's mound to seek.
Such was his wont; and there his dream
Soared on some wild fantastic theme,
Of faithful love, or ceaseless Spring,
Till Contemplation's wearied wing
The enthusiast could no more sustain,
And sad he sunk to earth again.

XXVI.

He loved—as many a lay can tell,
Preserved in Stanmore's lonely dell;
For his was minstrel's skill, he caught
The art unteachable, untaught;
He loved—his soul did nature frame
For love, and fancy nursed the flame;

Vainly he loved—for seldom swain
Of such soft mould is loved again;
Silent he loved—in every gaze
Was passion, friendship in his phrase.
So mused his life away—till died
His brethren all, their father's pride.
Wilfrid is now the only heir
Of all his stratagems and care,
And destined, darkling, to pursue
Ambition's maze by Oswald's clue.

XXVII.

Wilfrid must love and woo the bright
Matilda, heir of Rokeby's knight.
To love her was an easy hest,
The secret empress of his breast;
To woo her was a harder task
To one that durst not hope or ask;

Yet all Matilda could, she gave
In pity to her gentle slave;
Friendship, esteem, and fair regard,
And praise, the poet's best reward!
She read the tales his taste approved,
And sung the lays he framed or loved;
Yet, loth to nurse the fatal flame
Of hopeless love in friendship's name,
In kind caprice she oft withdrew
The favouring glance to friendship due,
Then grieved to see her victim's pain,
And gave the dangerous smiles again.

XXVIII.

So did the suit of Wilfrid stand,
When war's loud summons waked the land.
Three banners, floating o'er the Tees,
The woe-foreboding peasant sees;

In concert oft they braved of old
The bordering Scot's incursion bold;
Frowning defiance in their pride,
Their vassals now and lords divide.
From his fair hall on Greta banks,
The Knight of Rokeby led his ranks,
To aid the valiant northern Earls,
Who drew the sword for royal Charles;
Mortham, by marriage near allied,—
His sister had been Rokeby's bride,
Though long before the civil fray
In peaceful grave the lady lay,—
Philip of Mortham raised his band,
And marched at Fairfax's command;
While Wycliffe, bound by many a train
Of kindred art with wily Vane,
Less prompt to brave the bloody field,
Made Barnard's battlements his shield,

Secured them with his Lunedale powers,
And for the Commons held the towers.

XXIX.

The lovely heir of Rokeby's knight
Waits in his halls the event of fight;
For England's war revered the claim
Of every unprotected name,
And spared, amid its fiercest rage,
Childhood and womanhood and age.
But Wilfrid, son to Rokeby's foe,
Must the dear privilege forego
By Greta's side, in evening grey,
To steal upon Matilda's way,
Striving, with fond hypocrisy,
For careless step and vacant eye;
Calming each anxious look and glance,
To give the meeting all to chance,

Or framing as a fair excuse,
The book, the pencil, or the muse;
Something to give, to sing, to say,
Some modern tale, some ancient lay.
Then, while the longed-for minutes last,—
Ah! minutes quickly over past!—
Recording each expression free,
Of kind or careless courtesy,
Each friendly look, each softer tone,
As food for fancy when alone.
All this is o'er—but still, unseen,
Wilfrid may lurk in Eastwood green,
To watch Matilda's wonted round,
While springs his heart at every sound.
She comes!—'tis but a passing sight,
Yet serves to cheat his weary night;
She comes not—He will wait the hour,
When her lamp lightens in the tower;

'Tis something yet, if, as she past,
Her shade is o'er the lattice cast.
"What is my life, my hope?" he said;
"Alas! a transitory shade."—

XXX.

Thus wore his life, though reason strove
For mastery in vain with love,
Forcing upon his thoughts the sum
Of present woe and ills to come,
While still he turned impatient ear
From Truth's intrusive voice severe.
Gentle, indifferent, and subdued,
In all but this, unmoved he viewed
Each outward change of ill and good:
But Wilfrid, docile, soft, and mild,
Was Fancy's spoiled and wayward child;

In her bright car she bade him ride,
With one fair form to grace his side,
Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
Flung her high spells around his seat,
Bathed in her dews his languid head,
Her fairy mantle o'er him spread;
For him her opiates gave to flow,
Which he who tastes can ne'er forego,
And placed him in her circle, free
From every stern reality,
Till, to the Visionary, seem
Her day-dreams truth, and truth a dream.

XXXI.

Woe to the youth whom Fancy gains,
Winning from Reason's hand the reins,
Pity and woe! for such a mind
Is soft, contemplative, and kind;

And woe to those who train such youth,
And spare to press the rights of truth,
The mind to strengthen and anneal,
While on the stithy glows the steel!
O teach him, while your lessons last,
To judge the present by the past;
Remind him of each wish pursued,
How rich it glowed with promised good;
Remind him of each wish enjoyed,
How soon his hopes possession cloyed!
Tell him, we play unequal game,
Whene'er we shoot by Fancy's aim;
And, ere he strip him for her race,
Shew the conditions of the chace.
Two Sisters by the goal are set,
Cold Disappointment and Regret;
One disenchants the winner's eyes,
And strips of all its worth the prize,

While one augments its gaudy show,
More to enhance the loser's woe.
The victor sees his fairy gold
Transformed, when won, to drossy mold,
But still the vanquished mourns his loss,
And rues, as gold, that glittering dross.

XXXII.

More wouldst thou know—yon tower survey,
Yon couch unpressed since parting day,
Yon untrimmed lamp, whose yellow gleam
Is mingling with the cold moon-beam,
And yon thin form!—the hectic red
On his pale cheek unequal spread;
The head reclined, the loosened hair,
The limbs relaxed, the mournful air.—
See, he looks up;—a woeful smile
Lightens his woe-worn cheek a while,—

'Tis Fancy wakes some idle thought,
To gild the ruin she has wrought;
For, like the bat of Indian brakes,
Her pinions fan the wound she makes,
And, soothing thus the dreamer's pain,
She drinks his life-blood from the vein.
Now to the lattice turn his eyes,
Vain hope! to see the sun arise.
The moon with clouds is still o'ercast,
Still howls by fits the stormy blast;
Another hour must wear away,
Ere the East kindle into day,
And, hark! to waste that weary hour,
He tries the minstrel's magic power.

XXXIII.

SONG.

TO THE MOON.

Hail to thy cold and clouded beam,
  Pale pilgrim of the troubled sky!
Hail, though the mists that o'er thee stream
  Lend to thy brow their sullen dye!
How should thy pure and peaceful eye
  Untroubled view our scenes below,
Or how a tearless beam supply
  To light a world of war and woe!

Fair Queen! I will not blame thee now,
  As once by Greta's fairy side;
Each little cloud that dimmed thy brow
  Did then an angel's beauty hide.

And of the shades I then could chide,
  Still are the thoughts to memory dear,
For, while a softer strain I tried,
  They hid my blush, and calmed my fear.

Then did I swear thy ray serene
  Was formed to light some lonely dell,
By two fond lovers only seen,
  Reflected from the crystal well;
Or sleeping on their mossy cell,
  Or quivering on the lattice bright,
Or glancing on their couch, to tell
  How swiftly wanes the summer night!

XXXIV.

He starts—a step at this lone hour!
A voice!—his father seeks the tower,

With haggard look and troubled sense,
Fresh from his dreadful conference.
"Wilfrid!—what, not to sleep addressed?
Thou hast no cares to chase thy rest.
Mortham has fallen on Marston-moor;
Bertram brings warrant to secure
His treasures, bought by spoil and blood,
For the state's use and public good.
The menials will thy voice obey;
Let his commission have its way,
In every point, in every word."—
Then, in a whisper,—"Take thy sword!
Bertram is—what I must not tell.
I hear his hasty step—farewell!"

END OF CANTO FIRST.

ROKEBY.

CANTO SECOND.

ROKEBY.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

FAR in the chambers of the west,
The gale had sighed itself to rest;
The moon was cloudless now and clear,
But pale, and soon to disappear.
The thin grey clouds waxed dimly light
On Brusleton and Houghton height;
And the rich dale, that eastward lay,
Waited the wakening touch of day,

To give its woods and cultured plain,
And towers and spires, to light again.
But, westward, Stanmore's shapeless swell,
And Lunedale wild, and Kelton-fell,
And rock-begirdled Gilmanscar,
And Arkingarth, lay dark afar;
While, as a livelier twilight falls,
Emerge proud Barnard's bannered walls.
High crowned he sits, in dawning pale,
The sovereign of the lovely vale.

II.

What prospects, from his watch-tower high,
Gleam gradual on the warder's eye!—
Far sweeping to the east, he sees
Down his deep woods the course of Tees,
And tracks his wanderings by the steam
Of summer vapours from the stream;

And ere he pace his destined hour
By Brackenbury's dungeon-tower,
These silver mists shall melt away,
And dew the woods with glittering spray.
Then in broad lustre shall be shewn
That mighty trench of living stone,
And each huge trunk that, from the side,
Reclines him o'er the darksome tide,
Where Tees, full many a fathom low,
Wears with his rage no common foe;
For pebbly bank, nor sand-bed here,
Nor clay-mound, checks his fierce career,
Condemned to mine a channelled way,
O'er solid sheets of marble grey.

III.

Nor Tees alone, in dawning bright,
Shall rush upon the ravished sight;

But many a tributary stream
Each from its own dark dell shall gleam;
Staindrop, who, in her sylvan course,
Beholds proud Raby's battled force;
The rural brook of Eglistone,
And Balder, named from Odin's son;
And Greta, to whose banks ere long
We lead the lovers of the song;
And silver Lune, from Stanemore wild,
And fairy Thorsgill's murmuring child,
And last and least, but loveliest still,
Romantic Deepdale's slender rill.
Who in that dim-wood glen hath strayed,
Yet longed for Roslin's magic glade?
Who, wandering there, hath sought to change
Even for that vale so stern and strange,
Where Cartland's crags, fantastic rent,
Through her green copse like spires are sent?

Yet, Albin, yet the praise be thine,
Thy scenes and story to combine!
Thou bid'st him, who by Roslin strays,
List to the deeds of other days;
'Mid Cartland's crags thou showest the cave,
The refuge of thy champion brave;
Giving each rock its storied tale,
Pouring a lay for every dale,
Knitting, as with a moral band,
Thy native legends with thy land,
To lend each scene the interest high
Which genius beams from beauty's eye.

IV.

Bertram awaited not the sight
Which sun-rise shews from Barnard's height,
But from the towers, preventing day,
With Wilfrid took his early way,

While misty dawn, and moon-beam pale,
Still mingled in the silent dale.
By Barnard's bridge of stately stone,
The southern bank of Tees they won;
Their winding path then eastward cast,
And Eglistone's grey ruins past.
Each on his own deep visions bent,
Silent and sad they onward went;
Well may you think that Bertram's mood
To Wilfrid savage seemed and rude;
Well may you think bold Risingham
Held Wilfrid trivial, poor, and tame;
And small the intercourse, I ween,
Such uncongenial souls between.

V.

Stern Bertram shunned the nearer way,
Through Rokeby's park and chase that lay,

And, skirting high the valley's ridge,
They crossed by Greta's ancient bridge,
Descending where her waters wind
Free for a space and unconfined,
As, 'scaped from Brignal's dark wood glen,
She seeks wild Mortham's deeper den.
There, as his eye glanced o'er the mound,
Raised by that Legion long renowned,
Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
Of pious, faithful, conquering fame,
" Stern sons of war!" sad Wilfrid sighed,
" Behold the boast of Roman pride!
What now of all your toils are known?
A grassy trench, a broken stone!"—
This to himself; for moral strain
To Bertram were addressed in vain.

VI.

Of different mood, a deeper sigh
Awoke, when Rokeby's turrets high
Were northward in the dawning seen
To rear them o'er the thicket green.
O then, though Spenser's self had strayed
Beside him through the lovely glade,
Lending his rich luxuriant glow
Of fancy, all its charms to show,
Pointing the stream rejoicing free,
As captive set at liberty,
Flashing her sparkling waves abroad,
And clamouring joyful on her road;
Pointing where, up the sunny banks,
The trees retire in scattered ranks,
Save where, advanced before the rest,
On knoll or hillock rears his crest,

Lonely and huge, the giant Oak;
As champions, when their band is broke,
Stand forth to guard the rearward post,
The bulwark of the scattered host—
All this, and more, might Spenser say,
Yet waste in vain his magic lay,
While Wilfrid eyed the distant tower,
Whose lattice lights Matilda's bower.

VII.

The open vale is soon past o'er,
Rokeby, though nigh, is seen no more;
Sinking mid Greta's thickets deep,
A wild and darker course they keep,
A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
As e'er the foot of Minstrel trode!
Broad shadows o'er their passage fell,
Deeper and narrower grew the dell;

It seemed some mountain, rent and riven,
A channel for the stream had given,
So high the cliffs of limestone grey
Hung beetling o'er the torrent's way,
Yielding, along their rugged base,
A flinty footpath's niggard space,
Where he, who winds 'twixt rock and wave,
May hear the headlong torrent rave,
And like a steed in frantic fit,
That flings the froth from curb and bit,
May view her chafe her waves to spray,
O'er every rock that bars her way,
Till foam-globes on her eddies ride,
Thick as the schemes of human pride,
That down life's current drive amain,
As frail, as frothy, and as vain!

VIII.

The cliffs, that rear the haughty head
High o'er the river's darksome bed,
Were now all naked, wild, and grey,
Now waving all with greenwood spray;
Here trees to every crevice clung,
And o'er the dell their branches hung;
And there, all splintered and uneven,
The shivered rocks ascend to heaven;
Oft, too, the ivy swathed their breast,
And wreathed its garland round their crest,
Or from the spires bade loosely flare
Its tendrils in the middle air.
As pennons wont to wave of old
O'er the high feast of Baron bold,
When revelled loud the feudal rout,
And the arched halls returned their shout,

Such and more wild is Greta's roar,
And such the echoes from her shore,
And so the ivied banners gleam,
Waved wildly o'er the brawling stream.

IX.

Now from the stream the rocks recede,
But leave between no sunny mead,
No, nor the spot of pebbly sand,
Oft found by such a mountain strand,
Forming such warm and dry retreat,
As fancy deems the lonely seat,
Where hermit, wandering from his cell,
His rosary might love to tell.
But here, 'twixt rock and river grew
A dismal grove of sable yew,
With whose sad tints were mingled seen
The blighted fir's sepulchral green.

Seemed that the trees their shadows cast
The earth that nourished them to blast,
For never knew that swarthy grove
The verdant hue that fairies love;
Nor wilding green, nor woodland flower,
Arose within its baleful bower;
The dank and sable earth receives
Its only carpet from the leaves,
That, from the withering branches cast,
Bestrewed the ground with every blast.
Though now the sun was o'er the hill,
In this dark spot 'twas twilight still,
Save that on Greta's farther side
Some straggling beams through copse-wood glide.
And wild and savage contrast made
That dingle's deep and funeral shade,
With the bright tints of early day,
Which, glimmering through the ivy spray,
On the opposing summit lay.

X.

The lated peasant shunned the dell,
For Superstition wont to tell
Of many a grisly sound and sight,
Scaring its path at dead of night.
When Christmas logs blaze high and wide,
Such wonders speed the festal tide,
While Curiosity and Fear,
Pleasure and Pain, sit crouching near,
Till childhood's cheek no longer glows,
And village maidens lose the rose.
The thrilling interest rises higher,
The circle closes nigh and nigher,
And shuddering glance is cast behind,
As louder moans the wintry wind.
Believe, that fitting scene was laid
For such wild tales in Mortham glade;

For who had seen on Greta's side,
By that dim light fierce Bertram stride,
In such a spot, at such an hour,—
If touched by Superstition's power,
Might well have deemed that Hell had given
A murderer's ghost to upper heaven,
While Wilfrid's form had seemed to glide
Like his pale victim by his side.

XI.

Nor think to village swains alone
Are these unearthly terrors known;
For not to rank nor sex confined
Is this vain ague of the mind.
Hearts firm as steel, as marble hard,
'Gainst faith, and love, and pity barred,
Have quaked like aspen leaves in May,
Beneath its universal sway.

Bertram had listed many a tale
Of wonder in his native dale,
That in his secret soul retained
The credence they in childhood gained;
Nor less his wild adventurous youth
Believed in every legend's truth,
Learned when beneath the tropic gale
Full swelled the vessel's steady sail,
And the broad Indian moon her light
Poured on the watch of middle night,
When seamen love to hear and tell
Of portent, prodigy, and spell;
What gales are sold on Lapland's shore,
How whistle rash bids tempests roar,
Of witch, of mermaid, and of sprite,
Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light;
Or of that Phantom Ship, whose form
Shoots like a meteor through the storm,

When the dark scud comes driving hard,
And lowered is every topsail yard,
And canvass, wove in earthly looms,
No more to brave the storm presumes!
Then, 'mid the war of sea and sky,
Top and top-gallant hoisted high,
Full-spread and crowded every sail,
The Dæmon-frigate braves the gale;
And well the doomed spectators know
The harbinger of wreck and woe.

XII.

Then too were told, in stifled tone,
Marvels and omens all their own;
How, by some desart isle or key,
Where Spaniards wrought their cruelty,
Or where the savage pirate's mood
Repaid it home in deeds of blood,

Strange nightly sounds of woe and fear
Appalled the listening buccaneer,
Whose light-armed shallop anchored lay
In ambush by the lonely bay.
The groan of grief, the shriek of pain,
Ring from the moon-light groves of cane;
The fierce adventurer's heart they scare,
Who wearies memory for a prayer,
Curses the road-stead, and with gale
Of early morning lifts the sail,
To give, in thirst of blood and prey,
A legend for another bay.

XIII.

Thus, as a man, a youth, a child,
Trained in the mystic and the wild,
With this on Bertram's soul at times
Rushed a dark feeling of his crimes;

Such to his troubled soul their form,
As the pale death-ship to the storm,
And such their omen dim and dread,
As shrieks and voices of the dead.
That pang, whose transitory force
Hovered 'twixt horror and remorse;
That pang, perchance, his bosom pressed,
As Wilfrid sudden he addressed.
" Wilfrid, this glen is never trod
Until the sun rides high abroad,
Yet twice have I beheld to-day
A form that seemed to dog our way;
Twice from my glance it seemed to flee,
And shroud itself by cliff or tree.
How think'st thou?—is our path way-laid,
Or hath thy sire my trust betrayed?
If so"—Ere, starting from his dream,
That turned upon a gentler theme,

Wilfrid had roused him to reply,
Bertram sprung forward, shouting high,
" Whate'er thou art, thou now shalt stand!
And forth he darted, sword in hand.

XIV.

As bursts the levin in its wrath,
He shot him down the sounding path;
Rock, wood, and stream, rung wildly out,
To his loud step and savage shout.
Seems that the object of his race
Hath scaled the cliffs; his frantic chace
Sidelong he turns, and now 'tis bent
Right up the rock's tall battlement;
Straining each sinew to ascend,
Foot, hand, and knee their aid must lend.
Wilfrid, all dizzy with dismay,
Views from beneath his dreadful way;

Now to the oak's warped roots he clings,
Now trusts his weight to ivy strings;
Now, like the wild goat, must he dare
An unsupported leap in air;
Hid in the shrubby rain-course now,
You mark him by the crashing bough,
And by his corslet's sullen clank,
And by the stones spurned from the bank,
And by the hawk scared from her nest,
And ravens croaking o'er their guest,
Who deem his forfeit limbs shall pay
The tribute of his bold essay.

XV.

See, he emerges!—desperate now
All farther course—yon beetling brow,
In craggy nakedness sublime,
What heart or foot shall dare to climb?

It bears no tendril for his clasp,
Presents no angle to his grasp;
Sole stay his foot may rest upon,
Is yon earth-bedded jetting stone.
Balanced on such precarious prop,
He strains his grasp to reach the top.
Just as the dangerous stretch he makes,
By heaven, his faithless footstool shakes!
Beneath his tottering bulk it bends,
It sways, it loosens, it descends!
And downward holds its headlong way,
Crashing o'er rock and copse-wood spray.
Loud thunders shake the echoing dell!—
Fell it alone?—alone it fell.
Just on the very verge of fate,
The hardy Bertram's falling weight
He trusted to his sinewy hands,
And on the top unharmed he stands!

XVI.

Wilfrid a safer path pursued,
At intervals where, roughly hewed,
Rude steps ascending from the dell
Rendered the cliffs accessible.
By circuit slow he thus attained
The height that Risingham had gained,
And when he issued from the wood,
Before the gate of Mortham stood.
'Twas a fair scene! the sunbeam lay
On battled tower and portal grey,
And from the grassy slope he sees
The Greta flow to meet the Tees,
Where, issuing from her darksome bed,
She caught the morning's eastern red,
And through the softening vale below
Rolled her bright waves in rosy glow,

All blushing to her bridal bed,
Like some shy maid in convent bred,
While linnet, lark, and blackbird gay,
Sing forth her nuptial roundelay.

XVII.

'Twas sweetly sung that roundelay,
That summer morn shone blithe and gay;
But morning beam, and wild bird's call,
Awaked not Mortham's silent hall.
No porter, by the low-browed gate,
Took in the wonted niche his seat;
To the paved court no peasant drew,
Waked to their toil no menial crew;
The maiden's carol was not heard,
As to her morning task she fared;
In the void offices around,
Rung not a hoof, nor bayed a hound,

Nor eager steed, with shrilling neigh,
Accused the lagging groom's delay;
Untrimmed, undressed, neglected now,
Was alley'd walk and orchard bough;
All spoke the master's absent care,
All spoke neglect and disrepair.
South of the gate an arrow-flight,
Two mighty elms their limbs unite,
As if a canopy to spread
O'er the lone dwelling of the dead;
For their huge boughs in arches bent
Above a massive monument,
Carved o'er in ancient Gothic wise,
With many a scutcheon and devise:
There, spent with toil and sunk in gloom,
Bertram stood pondering by the tomb.

XVIII.

" It vanished, like a flitting ghost!
Behind this tomb," he said, " 'twas lost—
This tomb, where oft I deemed, lies stored
Of Mortham's Indian wealth the hoard.
'Tis true, the aged servants said
Here his lamented wife is laid;
But weightier reasons may be guessed
For their lord's strict and stern behest,
That none should on his steps intrude,
Whene'er he sought this solitude.—
An ancient mariner I knew,
What time I sailed with Morgan's crew,
Who oft, 'mid our carousals, spake
Of Raleigh, Forbisher, and Drake;
Adventurous hearts! who bartered bold
Their English steel for Spanish gold.

Trust not, would his experience say,
Captain or comrade with your prey;
But seek some charnel, when, at full,
The moon gilds skeleton and skull.
There dig and tomb your precious heap,
And bid the dead your treasure keep;
Sure stewards they, if fitting spell
Their service to the task compel.
Lacks there such charnel?—kill a slave,
Or prisoner, on the treasure-grave;
And bid his discontented ghost
Stalk nightly on his lonely post.—
Such was his tale. Its truth, I ween,
Is in my morning vision seen."—

XIX.

Wilfrid, who scorned the legend wild,
In mingled mirth and pity smiled,

Much marvelling that a breast so bold
In such fond tale belief should hold;
But yet of Bertram sought to know
The apparition's form and show.—
The power within the guilty breast,
Oft vanquished, never quite suppressed,
That unsubdued and lurking lies
To take the felon by surprise,
And force him, as by magic spell,
In his despite his guilt to tell,—
That power in Bertram's breast awoke;
Scarce conscious he was heard, he spoke:
" 'Twas Mortham's form, from foot to head!
His morion with the plume of red,
His shape, his mien—'twas Mortham right,
As when I slew him in the fight."—
—" Thou slay him?—thou?"—With conscious start
He heard, then manned his haughty heart.—

—" I slew him?—I!—I had forgot,
Thou, stripling, knewest not of the plot.
But it is spoken—nor will I
Deed done, or spoken word, deny.
I slew him, I! for thankless pride;
'Twas by this hand that Mortham died."—

XX.

Wilfrid, of gentle hand and heart,
Averse to every active part,
But most averse to martial broil,
From danger shrunk, and turned from toil;
Yet the meek lover of the lyre
Nursed one brave spark of noble fire;
Against injustice, fraud, or wrong,
His blood beat high, his hand waxed strong.
Not his the nerves that could sustain,
Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain;

But when that spark blazed forth to flame,
He rose superior to his frame.
And now it came, that generous mood;
And, in full current of his blood,
On Bertram he laid desperate hand,
Placed firm his foot, and drew his brand.
"Should every fiend to whom thou'rt sold,
Rise in thine aid, I keep my hold.—
Arouse there, ho! take spear and sword!
Attach the murderer of your Lord!"—

XXI.

A moment, fixed as by a spell,
Stood Bertram—it seemed miracle,
That one so feeble, soft, and tame,
Set grasp on warlike Risingham.
But when he felt a feeble stroke,
The fiend within the ruffian woke!

To wrench the sword from Wilfrid's hand,
To dash him headlong on the sand,
Was but one moment's work,—one more
Had drenched the blade in Wilfrid's gore;
But, in the instant it arose,
To end his life, his love, his woes,
A warlike Form, that marked the scene,
Presents his rapier sheathed between,
Parries the fast-descending blow,
And, steps 'twixt Wilfrid and his foe;
Nor then unscabbarded his brand,
But, sternly pointing with his hand,
With monarch's voice forbade the fight,
And motioned Bertram from his sight.
" Go, and repent,"—he said, " while time
Is given thee; add not crime to crime."—

XXII.

Mute and uncertain and amazed,
As on a vision Bertram gazed!
'Twas Mortham's bearing bold and high,
His sinewy frame, his falcon eye,
His look and accent of command,
The martial gesture of his hand,
His stately form, spare-built and tall,
His war-bleached locks—'twas Mortham all.
Through Bertram's dizzy brain career
A thousand thoughts, and all of fear;
His wavering faith received not quite
The form he saw as Mortham's sprite,
But more he feared it, if it stood
His lord, in living flesh and blood—
What spectre can the charnel send,
So dreadful as an injured friend?

Then, too, the habit of command,
Used by the leader of the band,
When Risingham, for many a day,
Had marched and fought beneath his sway,
Tamed him—and, with reverted face,
Backwards he bore his sullen pace,
Oft stopped, and oft on Mortham stared,
And dark as rated mastiff glared;
But when the tramp of steeds was heard,
Plunged in the glen, and disappeared.
Nor longer there the Warrior stood,
Retiring eastward through the wood;
But first to Wilfrid warning gives,
"Tell thou to none that Mortham lives."—

XXIII.

Still rung these words in Wilfrid's ear,
Hinting he knew not what of fear,

When nearer came the coursers' tread,
And, with his father at their head,
Of horsemen armed a gallant power
Reined up their steeds before the tower.
" Whence these pale looks, my son ?" he said :
" Where's Bertram ? why that naked blade ?"—
Wilfrid ambiguously replied,
(For Mortham's charge his honour tied)
" Bertram is gone—the villain's word
Avouched him murderer of his lord !
Even now we fought—but, when your tread
Announced you nigh, the felon fled."—
In Wycliffe's conscious eye appear
A guilty hope, a guilty fear ;
On his pale brow the dew-drop broke,
And his lip quivered as he spoke.

XXIV.

" A murderer!—Philip Mortham died
Amid the battle's wildest tide.
Wilfrid, or Bertram raves, or you!
Yet grant such strange confession true,
Pursuit were vain—let him fly far—
Justice must sleep in civil war."—
A gallant Youth rode near his side,
Brave Rokeby's page, in battle tried;
That morn, an embassy of weight
He brought to Barnard's castle gate,
And followed now in Wycliffe's train,
An answer for his lord to gain.
His steed, whose arched and sable neck
An hundred wreaths of foam bedeck,
Chafed not against the curb more high
Than he at Oswald's cold reply;

He bit his lip, implored his saint,
(His the old faith)—then burst restraint.

XXV.

"Yes!—I beheld his bloody fall,
By that base traitor's dastard ball,
Just when I thought to measure sword,
Presumptuous hope! with Mortham's lord.
And shall the murderer 'scape, who slew
His leader generous, brave, and true?
Escape!—while on the dew you trace
The marks of his gigantic pace?
No!—ere the sun that dew shall dry,
False Risingham shall yield or die.—
Ring out the Castle larum bell!
Arouse the peasants with the knell!
Meantime, disperse—ride, gallants, ride!
Beset the wood on every side.

But if among you one there be,
That honours Mortham's memory,
Let him dismount and follow me!
Else on your crests sit fear and shame,
And foul suspicion dog your name!"—

XXVI.

Instant to earth young Redmond sprung;
Instant on earth the harness rung
Of twenty men of Wycliffe's band,
Who waited not their lord's command.
Redmond his spurs from buskins drew,
His mantle from his shoulders threw,
His pistols in his belt he placed,
The green wood gained, the footsteps traced,
Shouted like huntsman to his hounds,
"To cover, hark!"—and in he bounds.

Scarce heard was Oswald's anxious cry,
"Suspicion! yes—pursue him—fly—
But venture not, in useless strife,
On ruffian desperate of his life.
Whoever finds him, shoot him dead!
Five hundred nobles for his head."—

XXVII.

The horsemen galloped, to make good
Each pass that issued from the wood.
Loud from the thickets rung the shout
Of Redmond and his eager route;
With them was Wilfrid, stung with ire,
And envying Redmond's martial fire,
And emulous of fame.—But where
Is Oswald, noble Mortham's heir?
He, bound by honour, law, and faith,
Avenger of his kinsman's death?—

Leaning against the elmin tree,
With drooping head and slackened knee,
And clenched teeth, and close-clasped hands,
In agony of soul he stands!
His downcast eye on earth is bent,
His soul to every sound is lent,
For in each shout that cleaves the air,
May ring discovery and despair.

XXVIII.

What 'vailed it him, that brightly played
The morning sun on Mortham's glade?
All seems in giddy round to ride,
Like objects on a stormy tide,
Seen eddying by the moon-light dim,
Imperfectly to sink and swim.
What 'vailed it, that the fair domain,
Its battled mansion, hill, and plain,

On which the sun so brightly shone,
Envied so long, was now his own?
The lowest dungeon, in that hour,
Of Brackenbury's dismal tower,
Had been his choice, could such a doom
Have opened Mortham's bloody tomb!
Forced, too, to turn unwilling ear
To each surmise of hope or fear,
Murmured among the rustics round,
Who gathered at the larum sound,
He dare not turn his head away,
Even to look up to heaven to pray,
Or call on hell, in bitter mood,
For one sharp death-shot from the wood!

XXIX.

At length o'erpast that dreadful space,
Back straggling came the scattered chace;

Jaded and weary, horse and man,
Returned the troopers, one by one.
Wilfrid, the last, arrived to say,
All trace was lost of Bertram's way,
Though Redmond still, up Brignal wood,
The hopeless quest in vain pursued.—
O fatal doom of human race!
What tyrant passions passions chace!
Remorse from Oswald's brow is gone,
Avarice and pride resume their throne;
The pang of instant terror by,
They dictate thus their slave's reply.

XXX.

"Aye—let him range like hasty hound!
And if the grim wolf's lair be found,
Small is my care how goes the game
With Redmond or with Risingham.—

Nay, answer not, thou simple boy!
Thy fair Matilda, all so coy
To thee, is of another mood
To that bold youth of Erin's blood.
Thy ditties will she freely praise,
And pay thy pains with courtly phrase;
In a rough path will oft command—
Accept at least—thy friendly hand;
His she avoids, or, urged and prayed,
Unwilling takes his proffered aid,
While conscious passion plainly speaks
In downcast look and blushing cheeks.
Whene'er he sings will she glide nigh,
And all her soul is in her eye,
Yet doubts she still to tender free
The wonted words of courtesy.
These are strong signs!—yet wherefore sigh,
And wipe, effeminate, thine eye?

Thine shall she be, if thou attend
The counsels of thy sire and friend.

XXXI.

" Scarce wert thou gone, when peep of light
Brought genuine news of Marston's fight.
Brave Cromwell turned the doubtful tide,
And conquest blessed the rightful side;
Three thousand cavaliers lie dead,
Rupert and that bold Marquis fled;
Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
Must fine for freedom and estate.
Of these committed to my charge,
Is Rokeby, prisoner at large;
Redmond, his page, arrived, to say
He reaches Bernard's towers to-day.
Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee!

Go to her now—be bold of cheer,
While her soul floats 'twixt hope and fear:
It is the very change of tide,
When best the female heart is tried—
Pride, prejudice, and modesty,
Are in the current swept to sea,
And the bold swain, who plies his oar,
May lightly row his bark to shore."—

END OF CANTO SECOND.

ROKEBY.

CANTO THIRD.

ROKEBY.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

THE hunting tribes of air and earth,
Respect the brethren of their birth;
Nature, who loves the claim of kind,
Less cruel chase to each assigned.
The falcon, poised on soaring wing,
Watches the wild-duck by the spring;
The slow-hound wakes the fox's lair,
The greyhound presses on the hare;

The eagle pounces on the lamb,
The wolf devours the fleecy dam;
Even tyger fell, and sullen bear,
Their likeness and their lineage spare.
Man, only, mars kind Nature's plan,
And turns the fierce pursuit on man;
Plying war's desultory trade,
Incursion, flight, and ambuscade,
Since Nimrod, Cush's mighty son,
At first the bloody game begun.

II.

The Indian, prowling for his prey,
Who hears the settlers track his way,
And knows in distant forest far
Camp his red brethren of the war;
He, when each double and disguise
To baffle the pursuit he tries,

Low crouching now his head to hide,
Where swampy streams through rushes glide,
Now covering with the withered leaves
The foot-prints that the dew receives;
He, skilled in every sylvan guile,
Knows not, nor tries such various wile,
As Risingham, when on the wind
Arose the loud pursuit behind.
In Redesdale his youth had heard
Each art her wily dalesmen dared,
When Rooken-edge, and Redswair high,
To bugle rung and blood-hound's cry,
Announcing Jedwood-axe and spear,
And Lid'sdale riders in the rear;
And well his venturous life had proved
The lessons that his childhood loved.

III.

Oft had he shewn, in climes afar,
Each attribute of roving war;
The sharpened ear, the piercing eye,
The quick resolve in danger nigh;
The speed, that, in the flight or chase,
Outstripped the Charib's rapid race;
The steady brain, the sinewy limb,
To leap, to climb, to dive, to swim;
The iron frame, inured to bear
Each dire inclemency of air,
Nor less confirmed to undergo
Fatigue's faint chill, and famine's throe.
These arts he proved, his life to save,
In peril oft by land and wave,
On Arawaca's desart shore,
Or where La Plata's billows roar,

When oft the sons of vengeful Spain
Tracked the marauder's steps in vain.
These arts, in Indian warfare tried,
Must save him now by Greta's side.

IV.

'Twas then, in hour of utmost need,
He proved his courage, art, and speed.
Now slow he stalked with stealthy pace,
Now started forth in rapid race,
Oft doubling back in mazy train,
To blind the trace the dews retain;
Now clombe the rocks projecting high,
To baffle the pursuer's eye,
Now sought the stream, whose brawling sound
The echo of his footsteps drowned.
But if the forest verge he nears,
There trample steeds and glimmer spears;

...HARAJA SERFO...

If deeper down the copse he drew,
He heard the rangers' loud halloo,
Beating each cover while they came,
As if to start the sylvan game.
'Twas then,—like tyger, close beset
At every pass with toil and net,
Countered, where'er he turns his glare,
By clashing arms and torches' flare,
Who meditates, with furious bound,
To burst on hunter, horse, and hound,—
'Twas then that Bertram's soul arose,
Prompting to rush upon his foes:
But as that crouching tyger, cow'd
By brandished steel and shouting crowd,
Retreats beneath the jungle's shroud,
Bertram suspends his purpose stern,
And couches in the brake and fern,
Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
The sparkle of his swarthy eye.

V.

Then Bertram might the bearing trace
Of the bold youth who led the chace,
Who paused to list for every sound,
Climbed every height to look around,
Then rushing on with naked sword,
Each dingle's bosky depths explored.
'Twas Redmond—by the azure eye;
'Twas Redmond—by the locks that fly
Disordered from his glowing cheek;
Mien, face, and form, young Redmond speak.
A form more active, light, and strong,
Ne'er shot the ranks of war along;
The modest, yet the manly mien,
Might grace the court of maiden queen.
A face more fair you well might find,
For Redmond's knew the sun and wind,

Nor boasted, from their tinge when free,
The charm of regularity;
But every feature had the power
To aid the expression of the hour:
Whether gay wit, and humour sly,
Danced laughing in his light-blue eye;
Or bended brow, and glance of fire,
And kindling cheek, spoke Erin's ire;
Or soft and saddened glances show
Her ready sympathy with woe;
Or in that wayward mood of mind,
When various feelings are combined,
When joy and sorrow mingle near,
And hope's bright wings are checked by fear,
And rising doubts keep transport down,
And anger lends a short-lived frown;
In that strange mood which maids approve,
Even when they dare not call it love,

With every change his features played,
As aspens shew the light and shade.

VI.

Well Risingham young Redmond knew;
And much he marvelled that the crew,
Roused to revenge bold Mortham dead,
Were by that Mortham's foeman led;
For never felt his soul the woe,
That wails a generous foeman low,
Far less that sense of justice strong,
That wreaks a generous foeman's wrong.
But small his leisure now to pause;
Redmond is first, whate'er the cause:
And twice that Redmond came so near,
Where Bertram couched like hunted deer,
The very boughs his steps displace,
Rustled against the ruffian's face,

Who, desperate, twice prepared to start,
And plunge his dagger in his heart!
But Redmond turned a different way,
And the bent boughs resumed their sway,
And Bertram held it wise, unseen,
Deeper to plunge in coppice green.
Thus, circled in his coil, the snake,
When roving hunters beat the brake,
Watches with red and glistening eye,
Prepared, if heedless step draw nigh,
With forked tongue and venomed fang
Instant to dart the deadly pang;
But if the intruders turn aside,
Away his coils unfolded glide,
And through the deep savannah wind,
Some undisturbed retreat to find.

VII.

But Bertram, as he backward drew,
And heard the loud pursuit renew,
And Redmond's hollo on the wind,
Oft muttered in his savage mind—
" Redmond O'Neale! were thou and I
Alone this day's event to try,
With not a second here to see,
But the grey cliff and oaken-tree,—
That voice of thine, that shouts so loud,
Should ne'er repeat its summons proud!
No! nor e'er try its melting power
Again in maiden's summer bower."—
Eluded, now behind him die,
Faint and more faint, each hostile cry;
He stands in Scargill wood alone,
Nor hears he now a harsher tone

Than the hoarse cushat's plaintive cry,
Or Greta's sound that murmurs by;
And on the dale, so lone and wild,
The summer sun in quiet smiled.

VIII.

He listened long with anxious heart,
Ear bent to hear, and foot to start,
And, while his stretched attention glows,
Refused his weary frame repose.
'Twas silence all—he laid him down,
Where purple heath profusely strown,
And throatwort with its azure bell,
And moss and thyme his cushion swell.
There, spent with toil, he listless eyed
The course of Greta's playful tide,
Beneath her banks now eddying dun,
Now brightly gleaming to the sun,

As, dancing over rock and stone,
In yellow light her currents shone,
Matching in hue the favourite gem
Of Albin's mountain-diadem.
Then, tired to watch the current's play,
He turned his weary eyes away,
To where the bank opposing shew'd
Its huge, square cliffs through shaggy wood.
One, prominent above the rest,
Reared to the sun its pale grey breast;
Around its broken summit grew
The hazel rude, and sable yew;
A thousand varied lichens dyed
Its waste and weather-beaten side,
And round its rugged basis lay,
By time or thunder rent away,
Fragments, that, from its frontlet torn,
Were mantled now by verdant thorn.

Such was the scene's wild majesty,
That filled stern Bertram's gazing eye.

IX.

In sullen mood he lay reclined,
Revolving, in his stormy mind,
The felon deed, the fruitless guilt,
His patron's blood by treason spilt;
A crime, it seemed, so dire and dread,
That it had power to wake the dead.
Then pondering on his life betrayed
By Oswald's art to Redmond's blade,
In treacherous purpose to withhold,
So seemed it, Mortham's promised gold,
A deep and full revenge he vowed
On Redmond, forward, fierce, and proud;
Revenge on Wilfrid—on his sire
Redoubled vengeance, swift and dire!—

2

If, in such mood, (as legends say,
And well believed that simple day,)
The Enemy of Man has power
To profit by the evil hour,
Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
His soul's redemption for revenge!
But, though his vows, with such a fire
Of earnest and intense desire
For vengeance dark and fell, were made,
As well might reach hell's lowest shade,
No deeper clouds the grove embrowned,
No nether thunders shook the ground;
The dæmon knew his vassal's heart,
And spared temptation's needless art.

X.

Oft, mingled with the direful theme,
Came Mortham's form—was it a dream?

Or had he seen, in vision true,
That very Mortham whom he slew?
Or had in living flesh appeared
The only man on earth he feared?—
To try the mystic cause intent,
His eyes, that on the cliff were bent,
Countered at once a dazzling glance,
Like sunbeam flashed from sword or lance.
At once he started as for fight,
But not a foeman was in sight;
He heard the cushat's murmur hoarse,
He heard the river's sounding course,
The solitary woodlands lay,
As slumbering in the summer ray.
He gazed, like lion roused, around,
Then sunk again upon the ground.
'Twas but, he thought, some fitful beam,
Glanced sudden from the sparkling stream;

Then plunged him in his gloomy train
Of ill-connected thoughts again,
Until a voice behind him cried,
" Bertram ! well met on Greta-side."—

XI.

Instant his sword was in his hand,
As instant sunk the ready brand ;
Yet, dubious still, opposed he stood
To him that issued from the wood :—
" Guy Denzil !—is it thou ?" he said ;
" Do we two meet in Scargill shade ?—
Stand back a space !—thy purpose show,
Whether thou comest as friend or foe.
Report hath said that Denzil's name
From Rokeby's band was razed with shame."—
" A shame I owe that hot O'Neale,
Who told his knight, in peevish zeal,

Of my marauding on the clowns
Of Calverley and Bradford downs.—
I reck not. In a war to strive,
Where, save the leaders, none can thrive,
Suits ill my mood; and better game
Awaits us both, if thou'rt the same
Unscrupulous, bold Risingham,
Who watched with me in midnight dark,
To snatch a deer from Rokeby-park.
How think'st thou?"—" Speak thy purpose out;
I love not mystery or doubt."—

XII.

" Then list.—Not far there lurk a crew,
Of trusty comrades staunch and true,
Gleaned from both factions—Roundheads, freed
From cant of sermon and of creed;

And Cavaliers, whose souls, like mine,
Spurn at the bonds of discipline.
Wiser we judge, by dale and wold,
A warfare of our own to hold,
Than breathe our last on battle-down,
For cloak or surplice, mace or crown.
Our schemes are laid, our purpose set,
A chief and leader lack we yet.—
Thou art a wanderer, it is said,
For Mortham's death thy steps waylaid,
Thy head at price—so say our spies,
Who ranged the valley in disguise—
Join then with us; though wild debate
And wrangling rends our infant state,
Each, to an equal loth to bow,
Will yield to chief renowned as thou."—

XIII.

" Even now," thought Bertram, " passion-stirred,
I called on hell, and hell has heard!
What lack I, my revenge to quench,
But such a band of comrades staunch?
This Denzil, vowed to every evil,
Might read a lesson to the devil.
Well, be it so! each knave and fool
Shall serve as my revenge's tool."—
Aloud, " I take thy proffer, Guy,
But tell me where thy comrades lie?"—
" Not far from hence," Guy Denzil said;
" Descend and cross the river's bed,
Where rises yonder cliff so grey"—
" Do thou," said Bertram, " lead the way."
Then muttered, " It is best make sure;
Guy Denzil's faith was never pure."—

He followed down the steep descent,
Then through the Greta's streams they went,
And, when they reached the farther shore,
They stood the lonely cliff before.

XIV.

With wonder Bertram heard within
The flinty rock a murmured din;
But when Guy pulled the wilding spray,
And brambles from its base away,
He saw, appearing to the air,
A little entrance low and square,
Like opening cell of hermit lone,
Dark winding through the living stone.
Here entered Denzil, Bertram here,
And loud and louder on their ear,
As from the bowels of the earth,
Resounded shouts of boisterous mirth.

Of old, the cavern strait and rude
In slaty rock the peasant hewed;
And Brignal's woods, and Scargill's, wave
E'en now o'er many a sister cave,
Where, far within the darksome rift,
The wedge and lever ply their thrift.
But war had silenced rural trade,
And the deserted mine was made
The banquet-hall, and fortress too,
Of Denzil and his desperate crew.
There Guilt his anxious revel kept;
There on his sordid pallet slept
Guilt-born Excess, the goblet drained
Still in his slumbering grasp retained;
Regret was there, his eye still cast
With vain repining on the past;
Among the feasters waited near,
Sorrow, and unrepentant Fear,

And Blasphemy, to frenzy driven,
With his own crimes reproaching heaven;
While Bertram shewed, amid the crew,
The Master-Fiend that Milton drew.

XV.

Hark! the loud revel wakes again,
To greet the leader of the train.
Behold the groupe by the pale lamp,
That struggles with the earthy damp.
By what strange features Vice hath known,
To single out and mark her own!
Yet some there are, whose brows retain
Less deeply stamped her brand and stain.
See yon pale stripling! when a boy,
A mother's pride, a father's joy!
Now, 'gainst the vault's rude walls reclined,
An early image fills his mind:

The cottage, once his sire's, he sees,
Embowered upon the banks of Tees;
He views sweet Winston's woodland scene,
And shares the dance on Gainsford-green.
A tear is springing—but the zest
Of some wild tale, or brutal jest,
Hath to loud laughter stirred the rest.
On him they call, the aptest mate
For jovial song and merry feat;
Fast flies his dream—with dauntless air,
As one victorious o'er despair,
He bids the ruddy cup go round,
Till sense and sorrow both are drowned,
And soon in merry wassail he,
The life of all their revelry,
Peals his loud song!—The muse has found
Her blossoms on the wildest ground,

'Mid noxious weeds at random strewed,
Themselves all profitless and rude—
With desperate merriment he sung,
The cavern to the chorus rung;
Yet mingled with his reckless glee
Remorse's bitter agony.

XVI.

SONG.

O Brignal banks are wild and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
  Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
  Beneath the turret high,
A Maiden on the castle wall
  Was singing merrily.

CHORUS.

"O Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather range with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen."—

"If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the green wood shalt thou speed,
As blithe as Queen of May."—

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, "Brignal banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;

I'd rather range with Edmund there,
  Than reign our English queen.

XVII.

" I read you, by your bugle-horn,
  And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn,
  To keep the king's green wood."—
" A ranger, lady, winds his horn
  And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
  And mine at dead of night."—

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, " Brignal banks are fair,
  And Greta woods are gay,
I would I were with Edmund there,
  To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnished brand and musquetoon,
  So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon,
  That lists the tuck of drum."—
"I list no more the tuck of drum,
  No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
  My comrades take the spear.

CHORUS.

"And O! though Brignal banks be fair,
  And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
  Would reign my Queen of May!

XVIII.

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
  A nameless death I'll die;

The fiend, whose lanthorn lights the mead,
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met,
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

CHORUS.

Yet Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
Would grace a summer queen."—

When Edmund ceased his simple song,
Was silence on the sullen throng,
Till waked some ruder mate their glee
With note of coarser minstrelsy.
But, far apart, in dark divan,
Denzil and Bertram many a plan,

Of import foul and fierce, designed,
While still on Bertram's grasping mind
The wealth of murdered Mortham hung;
Though half he feared his daring tongue,
When it should give his wishes birth,
Might raise a spectre from the earth!

XIX.

At length his wondrous tale he told,
When scornful smiled his comrade bold;
For, trained in license of a court,
Religion's self was Denzil's sport,
Then judge in what contempt he held
The visionary tales of eld!
His awe for Bertram scarce repressed
The unbeliever's sneering jest.
" 'Twere hard," he said, " for sage or seer
To spell the subject of your fear;

Nor do I boast the art renowned,
Vision and omen to expound.
Yet, faith if I must needs afford
To spectre watching treasured hoard,
As bandog keeps his master's roof,
Bidding the plunderer stand aloof,
This doubt remains—thy goblin gaunt
Hath chosen ill his ghostly haunt;
For why his guard on Mortham hold,
When Rokeby castle hath the gold,
Thy patron won on Indian soil,
By stealth, by piracy, and spoil?"—

XX.

At this he paused—for angry shame
Lowered on the brow of Risingham.
He blushed to think that he should seem
Assertor of an airy dream,
And gave his wrath another theme.

“ Denzil,” he says, “ though lowly laid,
Wrong not the memory of the dead;
For, while he lived, at Mortham's look
Thy very soul, Guy Denzil, shook!
And when he taxed thy breach of word
To yon fair Rose of Allenford,
I saw thee crouch like chastened hound,
Whose back the huntsman's lash hath found.
Nor dare to call his foreign wealth
The spoil of piracy or stealth;
He won it bravely with his brand,
When Spain waged warfare with our land.
Mark too—I brook no idle jeer,
Nor couple Bertram's name with fear;
Mine is but half the dæmon's lot,
For I believe, but tremble not.—
Enough of this.—Say, why this hoard
Thou deem'st at Rokeby castle stored;

Or think'st that Mortham would bestow
His treasure with his faction's foe?"—

XXI.

Soon quenched was Denzil's ill-timed mirth;
Rather he would have seen the earth
Give to ten thousand spectres birth,
Than ventured to awake to flame
The deadly wrath of Risingham.
Submiss he answered,—" Mortham's mind,
Thou knowest, to joy was ill inclined.
In youth, 'tis said, a gallant free,
A lusty reveller was he;
But since returned from over sea,
A sullen and a silent mood
Hath numbed the current of his blood.
Hence he refused each kindly call
To Rokeby's hospitable hall,

And our stout Knight, at dawn of morn
Who loved to hear the bugle-horn,
Nor less, when eve his oaks embrowned,
To see the ruddy cup go round,
Took umbrage that a friend so near
Refused to share his chace and cheer;
Thus did the kindred barons jar,
Ere they divided in the war.
Yet trust me, friend, Matilda fair
Of Mortham's wealth is destined heir."—

XXII.

"Destined to her! to yon slight maid!
The prize my life had well nigh paid,
When 'gainst Laroche, by Cayo's wave,
I fought my patron's wealth to save!—
Denzil, I knew him long, yet ne'er
Knew him that joyous cavalier,

Whom youthful friends and early fame
Called soul of gallantry and game.
A moody man he sought our crew,
Desperate and dark, whom no one knew;
And rose, as men with us must rise,
By scorning life and all its ties.
On each adventure rash he roved,
As danger for itself he loved;
On his sad brow nor mirth nor wine
Could e'er one wrinkled knot untwine;
Ill was the omen if he smiled,
For 'twas in peril stern and wild;
But when he laughed, each luckless mate
Might hold our fortune desperate.
Foremost he fought in every broil,
Then scornful turned him from the spoil;
Nay, often strove to bar the way
Between his comrades and their prey;

Preaching, even then, to such as we,
Hot with our dear-bought victory,
Of mercy and humanity!

XXIII.

" I loved him well—his fearless part,
His gallant leading, won my heart.
And after each victorious fight
'Twas I that wrangled for his right,
Redeemed his portion of the prey
That greedier mates had torn away,
In field and storm thrice saved his life,
And once amid our comrades' strife.—
Yes, I have loved thee ! well hath proved
My toil, my danger, how I loved !
Yet will I mourn no more thy fate,
Ingrate in life, in death ingrate.

Rise, if thou canst!" he looked around,
And sternly stamped upon the ground—
"Rise, with thy bearing proud and high,
Even as this morn it met mine eye,
And give me, if thou darest, the lie!"—
He paused—then, calm and passion-freed,
Bade Denzil with his tale proceed.

XXIV.

"Bertram, to thee I need not tell,
What thou hast cause to wot so well,
How superstition's nets were twined
Around the lord of Mortham's mind;
But since he drove thee from his tower,
A maid he found in Greta bower,
Whose speech, like David's harp, had sway,
To charm his evil fiend away.

I know not if her features moved
Remembrance of the wife he loved;
But he would gaze upon her eye,
Till his mood softened to a sigh.
He, whom no living mortal sought
To question of his secret thought,
Now every thought and care confessed
To his fair niece's faithful breast;
Nor was there aught of rich and rare,
In earth, in ocean, or in air,
But it must deck Matilda's hair.
Her love still bound him unto life;
But then awoke the civil strife,
And menials bore, by his commands,
Three coffers with their iron bands,
From Mortham's vault at midnight deep,
To her lone bower in Rokeby-Keep,

Ponderous with gold and plate of pride,
His gift, if he in battle died."—

XXV.

" Then Denzil, as I guess, lays train,
These iron-banded chests to gain;
Else, wherefore should he hover here,
Where many a peril waits him near,
For all his feats of war and peace,
For plundered boors and harts of greece?*
Since through the hamlets as he fared,
What hearth has Guy's marauding spared,
Or where the Chace that hath not rung
With Denzil's bow at midnight strung?"—
—" I hold my wont—my rangers go
Even now to track a milk-white doe.

* Deer in season. See Note.

By Rokeby-hall she takes her lair,
In Greta wood she harbours fair,
And when my huntsman marks her way,
What think'st thou, Bertram, of the prey?
Were Rokeby's daughter in our power,
We rate her ransom at her dower!"—

XXVI.

" 'Tis well!—there's vengeance in the thought!
Matilda is by Wilfrid sought,
And hot-brained Redmond, too, 'tis said,
Pays lover's homage to the maid.
Bertram she scorned—if met by chance,
She turned from me her shuddering glance,
Like a nice dame, that will not brook
On what she hates and loathes to look;
She told to Mortham, she could ne'er
Behold me without secret fear,

Foreboding evil :—she may rue
To find her prophecy fall true !—
The war has weeded Rokeby's train,
Few followers in his halls remain ;
If thy scheme miss, then, brief and bold,
We are enow to storm the hold,
Bear off the plunder and the dame,
And leave the castle all in flame."—

XXVII.

" Still art thou Valour's venturous son !
Yet ponder first the risque to run ;
The menials of the castle, true,
And stubborn to their charge, though few ;
The wall to scale—the moat to cross—
The wicket-grate—the inner fosse"—
—" Fool ! if we blench for toys like these,
On what fair guerdon can we seize ?

Our hardiest venture, to explore
Some wretched peasant's fenceless door,
And the best prize we bear away,
The earnings of his sordid day."—
—"Awhile thy hasty taunt forbear:
In sight of road more sure and fair,
Thou wouldst not chuse, in blindfold wrath,
Or wantonness, a desperate path?
List then:—for vantage or assault,
From gilded vane to dungeon-vault,
Each pass of Rokeby-house I know:
There is one postern dark and low,
That issues at a secret spot,
By most neglected or forgot.
Now, could a spial of our train
On fair pretext admittance gain,
That sally-port might be unbarr'd;
Then, vain were battlement and ward!"—

XXVIII.

" Now speak'st thou well;—to me the same,
If force or art shall urge the game;
Indifferent if like fox I wind,
Or spring like tyger on the hind.—
But hark! our merry-men so gay
Troll forth another roundelay.

SONG.

" A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine!
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,

A doublet of the Lincoln green,—
No more of me you knew,
My love!
No more of me you knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow,
Ere we two meet again."—
He turned his charger as he spake,
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle reins a shake,
Said, "Adieu for evermore,
My love!
And adieu for evermore."—

XXIX.

" What youth is this, your band among,
The best for minstrelsy and song?
In his wild notes seem aptly met
A strain of pleasure and regret."—
" Edmund of Winston is his name;
The hamlet sounded with the fame
Of early hopes his childhood gave,—
Now centred all in Brignal cave!
I watch him well—his wayward course
Shews oft a tincture of remorse.
Some early love-shaft grazed his heart,
And oft the scar will ache and smart.
Yet is he useful;—of the rest,
By fits the darling and the jest,
His harp, his story, and his lay,
Oft aid the idle hours away:

When unemployed, each fiery mate
Is ripe for mutinous debate.
He tuned his strings e'en now—again
He wakes them, with a blither strain.

XXX.

SONG.

ALLEN-A-DALE.

Allen-a-Dale has no faggot for burning,
Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,
Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,
Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the winning.
Come, read me my riddle! come, hearken my tale!
And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale.

The Baron of Ravensworth prances in pride,
And he views his domains upon Arkindale side,

The mere for his net, and the land for his game,
The chace for the wild, and the park for the tame;
Yet the fish of the lake, and the deer of the vale,
Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,
Though his spur be as sharp, and his blade be as bright;
Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw at his word;
And the best of our nobles his bonnet will vail,
Who at Rere-cross on Stanemore meets Allan-a-Dale.

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come;
The mother, she asked of his house and his home:
"Though the Castle of Richmond stand fair on the hill,
My hall," quoth bold Allen," shews gallanter still;
'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its crescent so pale,
And with all its bright spangles!" said Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel, and the mother was stone;
They lifted the latch, and they bade him be gone;
But loud, on the morrow, their wail and their cry!
He had laughed on the lass with his bonny black eye,
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-tale,
And the youth it was told by was Allen-a-Dale!

XXXI.

"Thou see'st that, whether sad or gay,
Love mingles ever in his lay.
But when his boyish wayward fit
Is o'er, he hath address and wit;
O! 'tis a brain of fire, can ape
Each dialect, each various shape."—
"Nay, then, to aid thy project, Guy—
Soft! who comes here?"—"My trusty spy.
Speak, Hamlin! hast thou lodged our deer?"—
"I have—but two fair stags are near;

I watched her as she slowly strayed
From Eglistone up Thorsgill glade;
But Wilfrid Wycliffe sought her side,
And then young Redmond in his pride
Shot down to meet them on their way;
Much, as it seemed, was theirs to say:
There's time to pitch both toil and net,
Before their path be homeward set."—
A hurried and a whispered speech
Did Bertram's will to Denzil teach,
Who, turning to the robber band,
Bade four the bravest take the brand.

END OF CANTO THIRD.

ROKEBY.

CANTO FOURTH.

ROKEBY.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

WHEN Denmark's Raven soared on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke,
And the broad shadow of her wing
Blackened each cataract and spring,
Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Force;

Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
Fixed on each vale a Runic name,
Reared high their altars' rugged stone,
And gave their Gods the land they won.
Then, Balder, one bleak garth was thine,
And one sweet brooklet's silver line;
But to the Monarch of the Mace,
That held in fight the foremost place,
To Odin's son, and Sifia's spouse,
Near Startforth high they paid their vows,
Remembered Thor's victorious fame,
And gave the dell the Thunderer's name.

II.

Yet Scald or Kemper erred, I ween,
Who gave that soft and quiet scene,
With all its varied light and shade,
And every little sunny glade,

And the blithe brook that strolls along
Its pebbled bed with summer song,
To the grim God of blood and scar,
The grisly King of Northern War.
O better were its banks assigned
To spirits of a gentler kind!
For, where the thicket-groupes recede,
And the rathe primrose decks the mead,
The velvet grass seems carpet meet
For the light fairies' lively feet.
Yon tufted knoll, with daisies strown,
Might make proud Oberon a throne,
While, hidden in the thicket nigh,
Puck should brood o'er his frolick sly;
And where profuse the wood-veitch clings
Round ash and elm in verdant rings,
Its pale and azure-pencilled flower
Should canopy Titania's bower.

III.

Here rise no cliffs the vale to shade,
But, skirting every sunny glade,
In fair variety of green
The woodland lends its sylvan screen.
Hoary, yet haughty, frowns the oak,
Its boughs by weight of ages broke;
And towers erect, in sable spire,
The pine-tree scathed by lightning fire;
The drooping ash and birch, between,
Hang their fair tresses o'er the green,
And all beneath, at random grow
Each coppice dwarf of varied show,
Or, round the stems profusely twined,
Fling summer odours on the wind.
Such varied groupe Urbino's hand
Round Him of Tarsus nobly planned,

What time he bade proud Athens own
On Mars's Mount the God Unknown!
Then grey Philosophy stood nigh,
Though bent by age, in spirit high;
There rose the scar-seamed Veteran's spear,
There Grecian Beauty bent to hear,
While Childhood at her foot was placed,
Or clung delighted to her waist.

IV.

" And rest we here," Matilda said,
And sate her in the varying shade.
" Chance-met, we well may steal an hour,
To friendship due from fortune's power.
Thou, Wilfrid, ever kind, must lend
Thy counsel to thy sister friend;
And, Redmond, thou, at my behest,
No farther urge thy desperate quest.

For to my care a charge is left,
Dangerous to one of aid bereft,
Well nigh an orphan, and alone,
Captive her sire, her house o'erthrown."—
Wilfrid, with wonted kindness graced,
Beside her on the turf she placed,
Then paused, with downcast look and eye,
Nor bade young Redmond seat him nigh.
Her conscious diffidence he saw,
Drew backward as in modest awe,
And sate a little space removed,
Unmarked to gaze on her he loved.

V.

Wreathed in its dark-brown rings, her hair
Half hid Matilda's forehead fair,
Half hid and half revealed to view
Her full dark eye of hazel hue.

The rose, with faint and feeble streak,
So slightly tinged the maiden's cheek,
That you had said her hue was pale,
But if she faced the summer gale,
Or spoke, or sung, or quicker moved,
Or heard the praise of those she loved,
Or when of interest was expressed
Aught that waked feeling in her breast,
The mantling blood in ready play
Rivalled the blush of rising day.
There was a soft and pensive grace,
A cast of thought upon her face,
That suited well the forehead high,
The eye-lash dark and down-cast eye;
The mild expression spoke a mind
In duty firm, composed, resigned;—
'Tis that which Roman art has given,
To mark their maiden Queen of heaven.

In hours of sport, that mood gave way
To Fancy's light and frolic play,
And when the dance, or tale, or song,
In harmless mirth sped time along,
Full oft her doating sire would call
His Maud the merriest of them all.
But days of war, and civil crime,
Allowed but ill such festal time,
And her soft pensiveness of brow
Had deepened into sadness now.
In Marston field her father ta'en,
Her friends dispersed, brave Mortham slain,
While every ill her soul foretold,
From Oswald's thirst of power and gold,
And boding thoughts that she must part
With a soft vision of her heart,—
All lowered around the lovely maid,
To darken her dejection's shade.

VI.

Who has not heard—while Erin yet
Strove 'gainst the Saxon's iron bit—
Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood embrued his steel,
Against St George's cross blazed high
The banners of his Tanistry,
To fiery Essex gave the foil,
And reigned a prince in Ulster's soil?
But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave Marshal fought and died,
And Avon-Duff to ocean bore
His billows, red with Saxon gore.
'Twas first in that disastrous fight,
Rokeby and Mortham proved their might.
There had they fallen amongst the rest,
But pity touched a chieftain's breast;

The Tanist he to great O'Neale,
He checked his followers' bloody zeal,
To quarter took the kinsmen bold,
And bore them to his mountain-hold,
Gave them each sylvan joy to know,
Slieve-Donard's cliffs and woods could show,
Shared with them Erin's festal cheer,
Showed them the chace of wolf and deer,
And, when a fitting time was come,
Safe and unransomed sent them home,
Loaded with many a gift, to prove
A generous foe's respect and love.

VII.

Years speed away. On Rokeby's head
Some touch of early snow was shed;
Calm he enjoyed, by Greta's wave,
The peace which James the Peaceful gave,

While Mortham, far beyond the main,
Waged his fierce wars on Indian Spain.—
It chanced, upon a wintry night,
That whitened Stanemore's stormy height,
The chace was o'er, the stag was killed,
In Rokeby-hall the cups were filled,
And, by the huge stone-chimney, sate
The Knight, in hospitable state.
Moonless the sky, the hour was late,
When a loud summons shook the gate,
And sore for entrance and for aid
A voice of foreign accent prayed.
The porter answered to the call,
And instant rushed into the hall
A Man, whose aspect and attire
Startled the circle by the fire.

VIII.

His plaited hair in elf-locks spread
Around his bare and matted head;
On leg and thigh, close stretched and trim,
His vesture shewed the sinewy limb;
In saffron dyed, a linen vest
Was frequent folded round his breast;
A mantle long and loose he wore,
Shaggy with ice, and stained with gore.
He clasped a burthen to his heart,
And, resting on a knotted dart,
The snow from hair and beard he shook,
And round him gazed with wildered look:
Then up the hall, with staggering pace,
He hastened by the blaze to place,
Half lifeless from the bitter air,
His load, a Boy of beauty rare.

To Rokeby, next, he louted low,
Then stood erect his tale to show,
With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous throne.
" Sir Richard, Lord of Rokeby, hear !
Turlough O'Neale salutes thee dear ;
He graces thee, and to thy care
Young Redmond gives, his grandson fair.
He bids thee breed him as thy son,
For Turlough's days of joy are done ;
And other lords have seized his land,
And faint and feeble is his hand,
And all the glory of Tyrone
Is like a morning vapour flown.
To bind the duty on thy soul,
He bids thee think on Erin's bowl !
If any wrong the young O'Neale,
He bids thee think of Erin's steel.

To Mortham first this charge was due,
But, in his absence, honours you.—
Now is my master's message by,
And Ferraught will contented die."—

IX.

His look grew fixed, his cheek grew pale,
He sunk when he had told his tale;
For, hid beneath his mantle wide,
A mortal wound was in his side.
Vain was all aid—in terror wild,
And sorrow, screamed the orphan child.
Poor Ferraught raised his wistful eyes,
And faintly strove to sooth his cries;
All reckless of his dying pain,
He blest, and blest him o'er again!
And kissed the little hands outspread,
And kissed and crossed the infant head,

And, in his native tongue and phrase,
Prayed to each saint to watch his days;
Then all his strength together drew,
The charge to Rokeby to renew.
When half was faultered from his breast,
And half by dying signs expressed,
" Bless the O'Neale!" he faintly said,
And thus the faithful spirit fled.

X.

'Twas long ere soothing might prevail
Upon the child to end the tale;
And then he said, that from his home
His grandsire had been forced to roam,
Which had not been if Redmond's hand
Had but had strength to draw the brand,
The brand of Lenaugh More the Red,
That hung beside the grey wolf's head.—

'Twas from his broken phrase descried,
His foster-father was his guide,
Who, in his charge, from Ulster bore
Letters, and gifts a goodly store;
But ruffians met them in the wood,
Ferraught in battle boldly stood,
Till wounded and o'erpowered at length,
And stripped of all, his failing strength
Just bore him here—and then the child
Renewed again his moaning wild.

XI.

The tear, down Childhood's cheek that flows,
Is like the dew-drop on the rose;
When next the summer breeze comes by,
And waves the bush, the flower is dry.
Won by their care, the orphan child
Soon on his new protectors smiled,

With dimpled cheek and eye so fair,
Through his thick curls of flaxen hair.
But blithest laughed that cheek and eye,
When Rokeby's little maid was nigh;
'Twas his, with elder brother's pride,
Matilda's tottering steps to guide;
His native lays in Irish tongue,
To sooth her infant ear he sung,
And primrose twined with daisy fair,
To form a chaplet for her hair.
By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's strand,
The children still were hand in hand,
And good Sir Richard smiling eyed
The early knot so kindly tied.

XII.

But summer months bring wilding shoot
From bud to bloom, from bloom to fruit;

And years draw on our human span,
From child to boy, from boy to man;
And soon in Rokeby's woods is seen
A gallant boy in hunter's green:
He loves to wake the felon boar,
In his dark haunt on Greta's shore,
And loves, against the deer so dun,
To draw the shaft, or lift the gun;
Yet more he loves, in autumn prime,
The hazel's spreading boughs to climb,
And down its clustered stores to hail,
Where young Matilda holds her veil.
And she, whose veil receives the shower,
Is altered too, and knows her power;
Assumes a monitress's pride,
Her Redmond's dangerous sports to chide,
Yet listens still to hear him tell
How the grim wild-boar fought and fell,

How at his fall the bugle rung,
Till rock and green-wood answer flung;
Then blesses her, that man can find
A pastime of such savage kind!

XIII.

But Redmond knew to weave his tale
So well with praise of wood and dale,
And knew so well each point to trace,
Gives living interest to the chace,
And knew so well o'er all to throw
His spirit's wild romantic glow,
That, while she blamed, and while she feared,
She loved each venturous tale she heard.
Oft, too, when drifted snow and rain
To bower and hall their steps restrain,
Together they explored the page
Of glowing bard or gifted sage,

Oft, placed the evening fire beside,
The minstrel art alternate tried,
While gladsome harp and lively lay
Bade winter-night flit fast away:
Thus from their childhood blending still
Their sport, their study, and their skill,
An union of the soul they prove,
But must not think that it was love.
But though they dared not, envious Fame
Soon dared to give that union name;
And when so often, side by side,
From year to year the pair she eyed,
She sometimes blamed the good old Knight,
As dull of ear and dim of sight,
Sometimes his purpose would declare,
That young O'Neale should wed his heir.

XIV.

The suit of Wilfrid rent disguise
And bandage from the lovers' eyes;
'Twas plain that Oswald, for his son,
Had Rokeby's favour well nigh won.
Now must they meet with change of cheer,
With mutual looks of shame and fear;
Now must Matilda stray apart,
To school her disobedient heart;
And Redmond now alone must rue
The love he never can subdue.
But factions rose, and Rokeby sware,
No rebel's son should wed his heir;
And Redmond, nurtured while a child
In many a bard's traditions wild,
Now sought the lonely wood or stream,
To cherish there a happier dream,

Of maiden won by sword and lance,
As in the regions of romance;
And count the heroes of his line,
Great Nial of the Pledges Nine,
Shane-Dymas wild, and Geraldine,
And Connan-More, who vowed his race
For ever to the fight and chace,
And cursed him, of his lineage born,
Should sheathe the sword to reap the corn,
Or leave the mountain and the wold,
To shroud himself in castled hold.
From such examples hope he drew,
And brightened as the trumpet blew.

XV.

If brides were won by heart and blade,
Redmond had both his cause to aid,

And all beside of nurture rare
That might beseem a baron's heir.
Turlough O'Neale, in Erin's strife,
On Rokeby's Lord bestowed his life,
And well did Rokeby's generous knight
Young Redmond for the deed requite.
Nor was his liberal care and cost
Upon the gallant stripling lost:
Seek the North Riding broad and wide,
Like Redmond none could steed bestride;
From Tynemouth search to Cumberland,
Like Redmond none could wield a brand;
And then, of humour kind and free,
And bearing him to each degree
With frank and fearless courtesy,
There never youth was formed to steal
Upon the heart like brave O'Neale.

XVI.

Sir Richard loved him as his son,
And when the days of peace were done,
And to the gales of war he gave
The banner of his sires to wave,
Redmond, distinguished by his care,
He chose that honoured flag to bear,
And named his page, the next degree
In that old time to chivalry.
In five pitched fields he well maintained
The honoured place his worth obtained,
And high was Redmond's youthful name
Blazed in the roll of martial fame.
Had fortune smiled on Marston fight,
The eve had seen him dubbed a knight;
Twice, 'mid the battle's doubtful strife,
Of Rokeby's lord he saved the life,

But when he saw him prisoner made,
He kissed and then resigned his blade,
And yielded him an easy prey
To those who led the Knight away,
Resolved Matilda's sire should prove,
In prison, as in fight, his love.

XVII.

When lovers meet in adverse hour,
'Tis like a sun-glimpse through a shower,
A watry ray an instant seen
The darkly closing clouds between.
As Redmond on the turf reclined,
The past and present filled his mind:
" It was not thus," Affection said,
" I dreamed of my return, dear maid!
Not thus, when, from thy trembling hand,
I took the banner and the brand,

When round me, as the bugles blew,
Their blades three hundred warriors drew,
And, while the standard I unrolled,
Clashed their bright arms with clamour bold.
Where is that banner now ?—its pride
Lies whelmed in Ouze's sullen tide!
Where now these warriors ?—in their gore,
They cumber Marston's dismal moor!
And what avails a useless brand,
Held by a captive's shackled hand,
That only would his life retain,
To aid thy sire to bear his chain!"—
Thus Redmond to himself apart,
Nor lighter was his rival's heart;
For Wilfrid, while his generous soul
Disdained to profit by controul,
By many a sign could mark too plain,
Save with such aid, his hopes were vain.

But now Matilda's accents stole
On the dark visions of their soul,
And bade their mournful musing fly,
Like mist before the zephyr's sigh.

XVIII.

" I need not to my friends recall,
How Mortham shunned my father's hall;
A man of silence and of woe,
Yet ever anxious to bestow
On my poor self whate'er could prove
A kinsman's confidence and love.
My feeble aid could sometimes chace
The clouds of sorrow for a space,
But, oftener, fixed beyond my power,
I marked his deep despondence lower.
One dismal cause, by all unguessed,
His fearful confidence confessed,

And twice it was my hap to see
Examples of that agony,
Which for a season can o'erstrain
And wreck the structure of the brain.
He had the awful power to know
The approaching mental overthrow,
And while his mind had courage yet
To struggle with the dreadful fit,
The victim writhed against its throes,
Like wretch beneath a murderer's blows.
This malady, I well could mark,
Sprung from some direful cause and dark;
But still he kept its source concealed,
Till arming for the civil field;
Then in my charge he bade me hold
A treasure huge of gems and gold,
With this disjointed dismal scroll
That tells the secret of his soul,

In such wild words as oft betray
A mind by anguish forced astray.

XIX.

MORTHAM'S HISTORY.

"Matilda! thou hast seen me start,
As if a dagger thrilled my heart,
When it has happ'd some casual phrase
Waked memory of my former days.
Believe, that few can backward cast
Their thought with pleasure on the past
But I!——my youth was rash and vain,
And blood and rage my manhood stain,
And my grey hairs must now descend
To my cold grave without a friend!
Even thou, Matilda, wilt disown
Thy kinsman, when his guilt is known.

And must I lift the bloody veil,
That hides my dark and fatal tale!
I must—I will—Pale phantom, cease!
Leave me one little hour in peace!
Thus haunted, think'st thou I have skill
Thine own commission to fulfill?
Or, while thou point'st, with gesture fierce,
Thy blighted cheek, thy bloody hearse,
How can I paint thee as thou wert,
So fair in face, so warm in heart!—

XX.

" Yes, she was fair!—Matilda, thou
Hast a soft sadness on thy brow;
But her's was like the sunny glow,
That laughs on earth and all below!
We wedded secret—there was need—
Differing in country and in creed;

And when to Mortham's tower she came,
We mentioned not her race and name,
Until thy sire, who fought afar,
Should turn him home from foreign war,
On whose kind influence we relied
To sooth her father's ire and pride.
Few months we lived retired, unknown,
To all but one dear friend alone,
One darling friend—I spare his shame,
I will not write the villain's name!
My trespasses I might forget,
And sue in vengeance for the debt
Due by a brother worm to me,
Ungrateful to God's clemency,
That spared me penitential time,
Nor cut me off amid my crime.—

XXI.

"A kindly smile to all she lent,
But on her husband's friend 'twas bent
So kind, that, from its harmless glee,
The wretch misconstrued villainy.
Repulsed in his presumptuous love,
A vengeful snare the traitor wove.
Alone we sate—the flask had flowed,
My blood with heat unwonted glowed,
When through the alleyed walk we spied
With hurried step my Edith glide,
Cowering beneath the verdant screen,
As one unwilling to be seen.
Words cannot paint the fiendish smile,
That curl'd the traitor's cheek the while!
Fiercely I questioned of the cause;
He made a cold and artful pause,

Then prayed it might not chafe my mood—
"There was a gallant in the wood!"—
We had been shooting at the deer;—
My cross-bow (evil chance!) was near:
That ready weapon of my wrath
I caught, and, hasting up the path,
In the yew grove my wife I found,
A stranger's arms her neck had bound!
I marked his heart—the bow I drew—
I loosed the shaft—'twas more than true!
I found my Edith's dying charms
Locked in her murdered brother's arms!
He came in secret to enquire
Her state, and reconcile her sire.—

XXII.

"All fled my rage—the villain first,
Whose craft my jealousy had nursed;

He sought in far and foreign clime
To 'scape the vengeance of his crime.
The manner of the slaughter done
Was known to few, my guilt to none;
Some tale my faithful steward framed—
I know not what—of shaft mis-aimed;
And even from those the act who knew,
He hid the hand the dart that threw.
Untouched by human laws I stood,
But God had heard the cry of blood!—
There is a blank upon my mind,
A fearful vision ill-defined,
Of raving till my flesh was torn,
Of dungeon-bolts and fetters worn—
And when I waked to woe more mild,
And questioned of my infant child—
(Have I not written, that she bare
A boy, like summer morning fair?)

With looks confused my menials tell,
That armed men in Mortham dell
Beset the nurse's evening way
And bore her, with her charge, away.
My faithless friend, and none but he,
Could profit by this villainy;
Him, then, I sought, with purpose dread
Of treble vengeance on his head!
He 'scaped me—but my bosom's wound
Some faint relief from wandering found,
And over distant land and sea
I bore my load of misery.

XXIII.

" 'Twas then that fate my footsteps led
Among a daring crew and dread,
With whom full oft my hated life
I ventured in such desperate strife,

That even my fierce associates saw
My frantic deeds with doubt and awe.
Much then I learned, and much can show,
Of human guilt and human woe,
Yet ne'er have, in my wanderings, known
A wretch, whose sorrows matched my own!—
It chanced, that, after battle fray,
Upon the bloody field we lay;
The yellow moon her lustre shed
Upon the wounded and the dead,
While, sense in toil and wassail drowned,
My ruffian comrades slept around.
There came a voice—its silver tone
Was soft, Matilda, as thine own—
"Ah wretch!" it said, "what makest thou here,
While unavenged my bloody bier,
While unprotected lives mine heir,
Without a father's name and care?"—

XXIV.

" I heard—obeyed—and homeward drew;
The fiercest of our desperate crew
I brought, at time of need to aid
My purposed vengeance, long delayed.
But, humble be my thanks to heaven,
That better hopes and thoughts has given,
And by our Lord's dear prayer has taught,
Mercy by mercy must be bought!—
Let me in misery rejoice—
I've seen his face—I've heard his voice—
I claimed of him my only child—
As he disowned the theft, he smiled!
That very calm and callous look,
That fiendish sneer his visage took,

As when he said, in scornful mood,
"There is a gallant in the wood!"—
—I did not slay him as he stood—
All praise be to my Maker given!
Long-sufferance is one path to heaven."—

XXV.

Thus far the woeful tale was heard,
When something in the thicket stirred.
Up Redmond sprung; the villain Guy,
(For he it was that lurked so nigh)
Drew back—he durst not cross his steel
A moment's space with brave O'Neale,
For all the treasured gold that rests
In Mortham's iron-banded chests.
Redmond resumed his seat;—he said,
Some roe was rustling in the shade.

Bertram laughed grimly, when he saw
His timorous comrade backward draw:
"A trusty mate art thou, to fear
A single arm, and aid so near!
Yet have I seen thee mark a deer.
Give me thy carabine—I'll show
An art that thou wilt gladly know,
How thou mayest safely quell a foe."—

XXVI.

On hands and knees fierce Bertram drew
The spreading birch and hazels through,
Till he had Redmond full in view.
The gun he levelled—mark like this
Was Bertram never known to miss,
When fair opposed to aim there sate
An object of his venomed hate.

That day young Redmond's death had seen,
But twice Matilda came between
The carabine and Redmond's breast,
Just ere the spring his finger pressed.
A deadly oath the ruffian swore,
But yet his fell design forbore:
"It ne'er," he muttered, "shall be said,
That thus I scathed thee, haughty maid!"
Then moved to seek more open aim,
When to his side Guy Denzil came:
"Bertram, forbear!—we are undone
For ever, if thou fire the gun.
By all the fiends, an armed force
Descends the dell, of foot and horse!
We perish if they hear a shot—
Madman! we have a safer plot—
Nay, friend, be ruled, and bear thee back!
Behold, down yonder hollow track,

The warlike leader of the band
Comes, with his broad-sword in his hand."—
Bertram looked up; he saw, he knew,
That Denzil's fears had counselled true,
Then cursed his fortune and withdrew,
Threaded the woodlands undescried,
And gained the cave on Greta-side.

XXVII.

They whom dark Bertram, in his wrath,
Doomed to captivity or death,
Their thoughts to one sad subject lent,
Saw not nor heard the ambushment.
Heedless and unconcerned they sate,
While on the very verge of fate;
Heedless and unconcerned remained,
When Heaven the murderer's arm restrained;

As ships drift darkling down the tide,
Nor see the shelves o'er which they glide.
Uninterrupted thus they heard
What Mortham's closing tale declared.
He spoke of wealth as of a load,
By Fortune on a wretch bestowed,
In bitter mockery of hate,
His cureless woes to aggravate;
But yet he prayed Matilda's care
Might save that treasure for his heir—
His Edith's son—for still he raved
As confident his life was saved;
In frequent vision, he averred,
He saw his face, his voice he heard.
Then argued calm—had murder been,
The blood, the corpses, had been seen;
Some had pretended, too, to mark
On Windermere a stranger bark,

Whose crew with jealous care, yet mild,
Guarded a female and a child.
While these faint proofs he told and pressed,
Hope seemed to kindle in his breast;
Though inconsistent, vague, and vain,
It warped his judgement and his brain.

XXVIII.

These solemn words his story close:—
" Heaven witness for me, that I chose
My part in this sad civil fight,
Moved by no cause but England's right.
My country's groans have bid me draw
My sword for gospel and for law;—
These righted, I fling arms aside,
And seek my son through Europe wide.

My wealth, on which a kinsman nigh
Already casts a grasping eye,
With thee may unsuspected lie.
When of my death Matilda hears,
Let her retain her trust three years;
If none, from me, the treasure claim,
Perished is Mortham's race and name;
Then let it leave her generous hand,
And flow in bounty o'er the land,
Soften the wounded prisoner's lot,
Rebuild the peasant's ruined cot;
That spoils, acquired by fight afar,
May mitigate domestic war."—

XXIX.

The generous youths, who well had known
Of Mortham's mind the powerful tone,

To that high mind, by sorrow swerved,
Gave sympathy his woes deserved;
But Wilfrid chief, who saw revealed
Why Mortham wished his life concealed,
In secret, doubtless, to pursue
The schemes his wildered fancy drew.
Thoughtful he heard Matilda tell,
That she would share her father's cell,
His partner of captivity,
Where'er his prison-house should be;
Yet grieved to think that Rokeby-hall,
Dismantled, and forsook by all,
Open to rapine and to stealth,
Had now no safe-guard for the wealth
Entrusted by her kinsman kind,
And for such noble use designed.
"Was Barnard-Castle then her choice,"
Wilfrid enquired with hasty voice,

"Since there the victor's laws ordain,
Her father must a space remain?"—
A fluttered hope his accents shook,
A fluttered joy was in his look.
Matilda hastened to reply,
For anger flashed in Redmond's eye:—
"Duty," she said with gentle grace,
"Kind Wilfrid, has no choice of place;
Else had I for my sire assigned
Prison less galling to his mind,
Than that his wild-wood haunts which sees,
And hears the murmur of the Tees,
Recalling thus, with every glance,
What captive's sorrow can enhance;—
But where those woes are highest, there
Needs Rokeby most his daughter's care."—

5

XXX.

He felt the kindly check she gave,
And stood abashed—then answered grave:—
"I sought thy purpose, noble maid,
Thy doubts to clear, thy schemes to aid.
I have beneath mine own command,
So wills my sire, a gallant band,
And well could send some horsemen wight
To bear the treasure forth by night,
And so bestow it as you deem
In these ill days may safest seem."—
"Thanks, gentle Wilfrid, thanks," she said:
O be it not one day delayed!
And, more thy sister-friend to aid,
Be thou thyself content to hold,
In thine own keeping, Mortham's gold,

Safest with thee."—While thus she spoke,
Armed soldiers on their converse broke,
The same of whose approach afraid,
The ruffians left their ambuscade.
Their chief to Wilfrid bended low,
Then looked around as for a foe.
"What mean'st thou, friend," young Wycliffe said,
"Why thus in arms beset the glade?"
—"That would I gladly learn from you;
For up my squadron as I drew,
To exercise our martial game
Upon the moor of Barninghame,
A stranger told you were way-laid,
Surrounded, and to death betrayed.
He had a leader's voice, I ween,
A falcon glance, a warrior's mien.
He bade me bring you instant aid;
I doubted not, and I obey'd."—

XXXI.

Wilfrid changed colour, and, amazed,
Turned short, and on the speaker gazed,
While Redmond every thicket round
Tracked earnest as a questing hound,
And Denzil's carabine he found;
Sure evidence, by which they knew
The warning was as kind as true.
Wisest it seemed, with cautious speed
To leave the dell. It was agreed,
That Redmond, with Matilda fair,
And fitting guard, should home repair;
At nightfall Wilfrid should attend,
With a strong band, his sister-friend,
To bear with her from Rokeby's bowers
To Barnard-Castle's lofty towers,

Secret and safe, the banded chests,
In which the wealth of Mortham rests.
This hasty purpose fixed, they part,
Each with a grieved and anxious heart.

END OF CANTO FOURTH.

ROKEBY.

CANTO FIFTH.

ROKEBY.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

THE sultry summer day is done,
The western hills have hid the sun,
But mountain peak and village spire
Retain reflection of his fire.
Old Barnard's towers are purple still,
To those that gaze from Toller-hill;
Distant and high, the tower of Bowes
Like steel upon the anvil glows;

And Stanemore's ridge, behind that lay,
Rich with the spoils of parting day,
In crimson and in gold array'd,
Streaks yet a while the closing shade,
Then slow resigns to darkening heaven
The tints which brighter hours had given.
Thus aged men full loth and slow
The vanities of life forego,
And count their youthful follies o'er,
Till Memory lends her light no more.

II.

The eve, that slow on upland fades,
Has darker closed on Rokeby's glades,
Where, sunk within their banks profound,
Her guardian streams to meeting wound.
The stately oaks, whose sombre frown
Of noontide made a twilight brown,

Impervious now to fainter light,
Of twilight make an early night.
Hoarse into middle air arose
The vespers of the roosting crows,
And with congenial murmurs seem
To wake the Genii of the stream;
For louder clamoured Greta's tide,
And Tees in deeper voice replied,
And fitful waked the evening wind,
Fitful in sighs its breath resigned.
Wilfrid, whose fancy-nurtured soul
Felt in the scene a soft controul,
With lighter footstep pressed the ground,
And often paused to look around;
And, though his path was to his love,
Could not but linger in the grove,
To drink the thrilling interest dear,
Of awful pleasure checked by fear.

Such inconsistent moods have we,
Even when our passions strike the key.

III.

Now through the wood's dark mazes past,
The opening lawn he reached at last,
Where, silvered by the moonlight ray,
The ancient Hall before him lay.
Those martial terrors long were fled,
That frowned of old around its head:
The battlements, the turrets grey,
Seemed half abandoned to decay;
On barbican and keep of stone
Stern Time the foeman's work had done;
Where banners the invader braved,
The hare-bell now and wall-flower waved;
In the rude guard-room, where of yore
Their weary hours the warders wore,

Now, while the cheerful faggots blaze,
On the paved floor the spindle plays;
The flanking guns dismounted lie,
The moat is ruinous and dry,
The grim portcullis gone—and all
The fortress turned to peaceful hall.

IV.

But yet precautions, lately ta'en,
Shewed danger's day revived again;
The court-yard wall shewed marks of care,
The fallen defences to repair,
Lending such strength as might withstand
The insult of marauding band.
The beams once more were taught to bear
The trembling draw-bridge into air,
And not, till questioned o'er and o'er,
For Wilfrid oped the jealous door;

And when he entered, bolt and bar
Resumed their place with sullen jar;
Then, as he crossed the vaulted porch,
The old grey porter raised his torch,
And viewed him o'er, from foot to head,
Ere to the hall his steps he led.
That huge old hall, of knightly state,
Dismantled seemed and desolate.
The moon through transom-shafts of stone,
Which crossed the latticed oriels, shone,
And by the mournful light she gave,
The Gothic vault seemed funeral cave.
Pennon and banner waved no more
O'er beams of stag and tusks of boar,
Nor glimmering arms were marshalled seen,
To glance those sylvan spoils between.
Those arms, those ensigns, borne away,
Accomplished Rokeby's brave array,
But all were lost on Marston's day!

Yet, here and there the moon-beams fall
Where armour yet adorns the wall,
Cumbrous of size, uncouth to sight,
And useless in the modern fight;
Like veteran relique of the wars,
Known only by neglected scars.

V.

Matilda soon to greet him came,
And bade them light the evening flame;
Said, all for parting was prepared,
And tarried but for Wilfrid's guard.
But, all reluctant to unfold,
His father's avarice of gold,
He hinted, that, lest jealous eye
Should on their precious burthen pry,
He judged it best the castle-gate
To enter when the night wore late;

And therefore he had left command
With those he trusted of his band,
That they should be at Rokeby met,
What time the midnight watch was set.
Now Redmond came, whose anxious care
Till then was busied to prepare
All needful, meetly to arrange
The mansion for its mournful change.
With Wilfrid's care and kindness pleased,
His cold unready hand he seized,
And pressed it till his kindly strain
The gentle youth returned again.
Seemed as between them this was said,
"Awhile let jealousy be dead;
And let our contest be, whose care
Shall best assist this helpless fair."—

VI.

There was no speech the truce to bind,
It was a compact of the mind;
A generous thought at once impressed
On either rival's generous breast.
Matilda well the secret took,
From sudden change of mien and look,
And—for not small had been her fear
Of jealous ire and danger near—
Felt, even in her dejected state,
A joy beyond the reach of fate.
They closed beside the chimney's blaze,
And talked and hoped for happier days,
And lent their spirits' rising glow
Awhile to gild impending woe;—
High privilege of youthful time,
Worth all the pleasures of our prime!

The bickering faggot sparkled bright,
And gave the scene of love to sight,
Bade Wilfrid's cheek more lively glow,
Played on Matilda's neck of snow,
Her nut-brown curls and forehead high,
And laughed in Redmond's azure eye.
Two lovers by the maiden sate,
Without a glance of jealous hate;
The maid her lovers sate between,
With open brow and equal mien:—
It is a sight but rarely spied,
Thanks to man's wrath and woman's pride.

VII.

While thus in peaceful guise they sate,
A knock alarmed the outer gate,
And, ere the tardy porter stirred,
The tinkling of a harp was heard.

A manly voice, of mellow swell,
Bore burthen to the music well.

SONG.

"Summer eve is gone and past,
Summer dew is falling fast;
I have wandered all the day,
Do not bid me farther stray!
Gentle hearts of gentle kin,
Take the wandering Harper in!"—

But the stern porter answer gave,
With "Get thee hence, thou strolling knave!
The king wants soldiers; war, I trow,
Were meeter trade for such as thou."—
At this unkind reproof, again
Answered the ready minstrel's strain.

SONG RESUMED.

"Bid not me, in battle-field,
Buckler lift, or broad-sword wield!
All my strength and all my art
Is to touch the gentle heart,
With the wizard notes that ring
From the peaceful minstrel string."—

The porter, all unmoved, replied,—
"Depart in peace, with heaven to guide;
If longer by the gate thou dwell,
Trust me, thou shalt not part so well."—

VIII.

With somewhat of appealing look,
The Harper's part young Wilfrid took;

"These notes so wild and ready thrill,
They show no vulgar minstrel's skill;
Hard were his task to seek a home
More distant, since the night is come;
And for his faith I dare engage—
Your Harpool's blood is soured by age;
His gate, once readily displayed,
To greet the friend, the poor to aid,
Now even to me, though known of old,
Did but reluctantly unfold."—
—"O blame not, as poor Harpool's crime,
An evil of this evil time.
He deems dependent on his care
The safety of his patron's heir,
Nor judges meet to ope the tower
To vagrants at our parting hour,
Urging his duty to excess
Of rough and stubborn faithfulness.

For this poor Harper I would fain
He may relax :—hark to his strain!

IX.

SONG RESUMED.

"I have song of war for knight,
Lay of love for lady bright,
Fairy tale to lull the heir,
Goblin grim the maids to scare;
Dark the night, and long till day,
Do not bid me farther stray!

"Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
I can count them name by name;
Legends of their line there be,
Known to few, but known to me;
If you honour Rokeby's kin,
Take the wandering Harper in!

"Rokeby's lords had fair regard
For the harp, and for the bard;
Baron's race throve never well,
Where the curse of minstrel fell.
If you love that noble kin,
Take the weary Harper in!"—

"Hark! Harpool parleys—there is hope,
Said Redmond, "that the gate will ope."—
—"For all thy brag and boast, I trow,
Nought know'st thou of the Felon Sow,"
Quoth Harpool, "nor how Greta-side
She roamed, and Rokeby forest wide;
Nor how Ralph Rokeby gave the beast
To Richmond's friars to make a feast.
Of Gilbert Griffinson the tale
Goes, and of gallant Peter Dale,

That well could strike with sword amain,
And of the valiant son of Spain,
Friar Middleton, and blithe Sir Ralph;
There were a gest to make us laugh!
If thou canst tell it, in yon shed
Thou'st won thy supper and thy bed."—

X.

Matilda smiled; "Cold hope," said she,
"From Harpool's love of minstrelsy!
But, for this Harper, may we dare,
Redmond, to mend his couch and fare?"
—"O ask not me!—at minstrel string
My heart from infancy would spring;
Nor can I hear its simplest strain,
But it brings Erin's dream again,
When placed by Owen Lysagh's knee,
(The Filea of O'Neale was he,

A blind and bearded man, whose eld
Was sacred as a prophet's held,)
I've seen a ring of rugged kerne,
With aspects shaggy, wild, and stern,
Enchanted by the master's lay,
Linger around the live-long day,
Shift from wild rage to wilder glee,
To love, to grief, to ecstacy,
And feel each varied change of soul
Obedient to the bard's controul.—
Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more;
Nor Owen's harp, beside the blaze,
Tell maiden's love, or heroes praise!
The mantling brambles hide thy hearth,
Centre of hospitable mirth;
All undistinguished in the glade,
My sires' glad home is prostrate laid,

Their vassals wander wide and far,
Serve foreign lords in distant war,
And now the stranger's sons enjoy
The lovely woods of Clandeboy!"—
He spoke, and proudly turned aside,
The starting tear to dry and hide.

XI.

Matilda's dark and softened eye
Was glistening ere O'Neale's was dry.
Her hand upon his arm she laid,—
" It is the will of heaven," she said.
" And think'st thou, Redmond, I can part
From this loved home with lightsome heart,
Leaving to wild neglect whate'er
Even from my infancy was dear?
For in this calm domestic bound
Were all Matilda's pleasures found.

That hearth, my sire was wont to grace,
Full soon may be a stranger's place;
This hall, in which a child I played,
Like thine, dear Redmond, lowly laid,
The bramble and the thorn may braid,
Or, passed for aye from me and mine,
It ne'er may shelter Rokeby's line.
Yet is this consolation given,
My Redmond,—'tis the will of heaven."—
Her word, her action, and her phrase,
Were kindly as in early days;
For cold reserve had lost its power,
In sorrow's sympathetic hour.
Young Redmond dared not trust his voice;
But rather had it been his choice
To share that melancholy hour,
Than, armed with all a chieftain's power,

In full possession to enjoy
Slieve-Donard wide, and Clandeboy.

XII.

The blood left Wilfrid's ashen cheek;
Matilda sees, and hastes to speak.—
"Happy in friendship's ready aid,
Let all my murmurs here be staid!
And Rokeby's maiden will not part
From Rokeby's hall with moody heart.
This night at least, for Rokeby's fame
The hospitable hearth shall flame,
And, ere its native heir retire,
Find for the wanderer rest and fire,
While this poor Harper, by the blaze,
Recounts the tale of other days.
Bid Harpool ope the door with speed,
Admit him, and relieve each need.—

Meantime, kind Wycliffe, wilt thou try
Thy minstrel skill?—nay, no reply—
And look not sad!—I guess thy thought,
Thy verse with laurels would be bought,
And poor Matilda, landless now,
Has not a garland for thy brow.
True, I must leave sweet Rokeby's glades,
Nor wander more in Greta shades,
But sure, no rigid jailor, thou
Wilt a short prison-walk allow,
Where summer flowers grow wild at will,
On Marwood-chace and Toller-hill;
Then holly green and lily gay
Shall twine in guerdon of thy lay."—
The mournful youth, a space aside
To tune Matilda's harp applied;
And then a low sad descant rung,
As prelude to the lay he sung.

XIII.

THE CYPRESS WREATH.

O Lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress tree!
Too lively glow the lilies light,
The varnished holly's all too bright,
The May-flower and the eglantine
May shade a brow less sad than mine;
But, Lady, weave no wreath for me,
Or weave it of the cypress tree!

Let dimpled Mirth his temples twine
With tendrils of the laughing vine;
The manly oak, the pensive yew,
To patriot and to sage be due;
The myrtle bough bids lovers live,
But that Matilda will not give;

Then, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress tree!

Let merry England proudly rear
Her blended roses, bought so dear;
Let Albin bind her bonnet blue
With heath and hare-bell dipped in dew;
On favoured Erin's crest be seen
The flower she loves of emerald green—
But, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress tree.

Strike the wild harp, while maids prepare
The ivy meet for minstrel's hair;
And, while his crown of laurel leaves
With bloody hand the victor weaves,
Let the loud trump his triumph tell;
But when you hear the passing bell,

Then, Lady, twine a wreath for me,
And twine it of the cypress tree.

Yes! twine for me the cypress bough;
But, O Matilda, twine not now!
Stay till a few brief months are past,
And I have looked and loved my last!
When villagers my shroud bestrew
With pansies, rosemary, and rue,—
Then, Lady, weave a wreath for me,
And weave it of the cypress tree.

XIV.

O'Neale observed the starting tear,
And spoke with kind and blithsome cheer—
"No, noble Wilfrid! ere the day
When mourns the land thy silent lay,

Shall many a wreath be freely wove
By hand of friendship and of love.
I would not wish that rigid Fate
Had doomed thee to a captive's state,
Whose hands are bound by honour's law,
Who wears a sword he must not draw;
But were it so, in minstrel pride
The land together would we ride,
On prancing steeds, like minstrels old,
Bound for the halls of barons bold;
Each lover of the lyre we'd seek,
From Michael's Mount to Skiddaw's peak,
Survey wild Albin's mountain strand,
And roam green Erin's lovely land,
While thou the gentler souls should move,
With lay of pity and of love,
And I, thy mate, in rougher strain,
Would sing of war and warriors slain.

Old England's bards were vanquished then,
And Scotland's vaunted Hawthornden,
And, silenced on Iernian shore,
M'Curtin's harp should charm no more!"—
In lively mood he spoke, to wile
From Wilfrid's woe-worn cheek a smile.

XV.

"But," said Matilda, "ere thy name,
Good Redmond, gain its destined fame,
Say, wilt thou kindly deign to call
Thy brother minstrel to the hall?
Bid all the household, too, attend,
Each in his rank a humble friend;
I know their faithful hearts will grieve,
When their poor mistress takes her leave,
So let the horn and beaker flow
To mitigate their parting woe."—

The Harper came:—in youth's first prime
Himself; in mode of olden time
His garb was fashioned, to express
The ancient English minstrel's dress,
A seemly gown of Kendal green,
With gorget closed of silver sheen;
His harp in silken scarf was slung,
And by his side an anlace hung.
It seemed some masquer's quaint array,
For revel or for holiday.

XVI.

He made obeisance, with a free
Yet studied air of courtesy.
Each look and accent, framed to please,
Seemed to affect a playful ease;
His face was of that doubtful kind,
That wins the eye, but not the mind;

Yet harsh it seemed to deem amiss
Of brow so young and smooth as this.
His was the subtle look and sly,
That, spying all, seems nought to spy;
Round all the groupe his glances stole,
Unmarked themselves, to mark the whole,
Yet sunk beneath Matilda's look,
Nor could the eye of Redmond brook.
To the suspicious, or the old,
Subtle and dangerous and bold
Had seemed this self-invited guest;
But young our lovers,—and the rest,
Wrapt in their sorrow and their fear
At parting of their mistress dear,
Tear-blinded to the castle hall,
Came as to bear her funeral pall.

XVII.

All that expression base was gone,
When waked the guest his minstrel tone;
It fled at inspiration's call,
As erst the Dæmon fled from Saul.
More noble glance he cast around,
More free-drawn breath inspired the sound,
His pulse beat bolder and more high,
In all the pride of minstrelsy!
Alas! too soon that pride was o'er,
Sunk with the lay that bade it soar!
His soul resumed, with habit's chain,
Its vices wild and follies vain,
And gave the talent, with him born,
To be a common curse and scorn.
Such was the youth whom Rokeby's maid,
With condescending kindness, prayed

Here to renew the strain she loved,
At distance heard and well approved.

XVIII.

SONG.

THE HARP.

I was a wild and wayward boy,
My childhood scorned each childish toy;
Retired from all, reserved and coy,
To musing prone,
I wooed my solitary joy,
My harp alone.

My youth, with bold Ambition's mood,
Despised the humble stream and wood
Where my poor father's cottage stood,
To fame unknown;—

What should my soaring views make good?
My harp alone.

Love came with all his frantic fire,
And wild romance of vain desire;
The Baron's daughter heard my lyre,
And praised the tone;—
What could presumptuous hope inspire?
My harp alone.

At Manhood's touch the bubble burst,
And Manhood's pride the vision curst,
And all that had my folly nursed
Love's sway to own;
Yet spared the spell that lulled me first,
My harp alone.

Woe came with war, and want with woe;
And it was mine to undergo
Each outrage of the rebel foe:—
Can aught atone
My fields made waste, my cot laid low?
My harp alone!

Ambition's dreams I've seen depart,
Have rued of penury the smart,
Have felt of love the venom'd dart
When hope was flown;
Yet rests one solace to my heart,—
My harp alone!

Then, over mountain, moor, and hill,
My faithful harp, I'll bear thee still;
And when this life of want and ill
Is well nigh gone,

Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill,
My harp alone!

XIX.

"A pleasing lay!" Matilda said,
But Harpool shook his old grey head,
And took his batton and his torch,
To seek his guard-room in the porch.
Edmund observed—with sudden change,
Among the strings his fingers range,
Until they waked a bolder glee
Of military melody;
Then paused amid the martial sound,
And looked with well-feigned fear around;—
"None to this noble house belong,"
He said, "that would a minstrel wrong,
Whose fate has been, through good and ill,
To love his Royal Master still,

And, with your honoured leave, would fain
Rejoice you with a loyal strain."—
Then, as assured by sign and look,
The warlike tone again he took;
And Harpool stopped, and turned to hear
A ditty of the Cavalier.

XX.

SONG.

THE CAVALIER.

While the dawn on the mountain was misty and gray,
My True Love has mounted his steed and away,
Over hill, over valley, o'er dale and o'er down;
Heaven shield the brave gallant that fights for the Crown!

He has doff'd the silk doublet the breast-plate to bear,
He has placed the steel-cap o'er his long flowing hair,
From his belt to his stirrup his broad-sword hangs down,—
Heaven shield the brave gallant that fights for the Crown!

For the rights of fair England that broad-sword he draws,
Her King is his leader, her Church is his cause;
His watch-word is honour, his pay is renown,—
God strike with the gallant that strikes for the Crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
The round-headed rebels of Westminster-hall;
But tell these bold traitors of proud London town,
That the spears of the North have encircled the Crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish, dread of their foes;
There's Erin's high Ormond, and Scotland's Montrose!
Would you match the base Skippon, and Massey, and
Brown,
With the Barons of England that fight for the Crown?

Now joy to the crest of the brave Cavalier!
Be his banner unconquered, resistless his spear,

Till in peace and in triumph his toils he may drown,
In a pledge to fair England, her Church, and her Crown!

XXI.

"Alas!" Matilda said, "that strain,
Good Harper, now is heard in vain!
The time has been, at such a sound,
When Rokeby's vassals gathered round,
An hundred manly hearts would bound;
But now, the stirring verse we hear,
Like trump in dying soldier's ear!
Listless and sad the notes we own,
The power to answer them is flown.
Yet not without his meet applause
Be he that sings the rightful cause,
Even when the crisis of its fate
To human eye seems desperate.

While Rokeby's heir such power retains,
Let this slight guerdon pay thy pains:—
And lend thy harp; I fain would try,
If my poor skill can aught supply,
Ere yet I leave my fathers' hall,
To mourn the cause in which we fall."—

XXII.

The Harper, with a downcast look,
And trembling hand, her bounty took.
As yet, the conscious pride of art
Had steeled him in his treacherous part;
A powerful spring, of force unguessed,
That hath each gentler mood suppressed,
And reigned in many a human breast,
From his that plans the red campaign,
To his that wastes the woodland reign.

The failing wing, the bloodshot eye,
The sportsman marks with apathy,
Each feeling of his victim's ill
Drowned in his own successful skill.
The veteran, too, who now no more
Aspires to head the battle's roar,
Loves still the triumph of his art,
And traces on the pencilled chart
Some stern invader's destined way,
Through blood and ruin, to his prey;
Patriots to death, and towns to flame,
He dooms, to raise another's name,
And shares the guilt, though not the fame.
What pays him for his span of time
Spent in premeditating crime?
What against pity arms his heart?—
It is the conscious pride of art.

XXIII.

But principles in Edmund's mind
Were baseless, vague, and undefined.
His soul, like bark whose rudder's lost,
On passion's changeful tide was tost;
Nor Vice nor Virtue had the power
Beyond the impression of the hour;
And O! when passion rules, how rare
The hours that fall to Virtue's share!
Yet now she roused her—for the pride,
That lack of sterner guilt supplied,
Could scarce support him when arose
The lay that mourned Matilda's woes.

SONG.

THE FAREWELL.

The sound of Rokeby's woods I hear,
 They mingle with the song;
Dark Greta's voice is in mine ear,
 I must not hear them long.
From every loved and native haunt
 The native heir must stray,
And, like a ghost whom sun-beams daunt,
 Must part before the day.

Soon from the halls my fathers reared,
 Their scutcheons may descend,
A line so long beloved and feared
 May soon obscurely end.

No longer here Matilda's tone
  Shall bid these echoes swell,
Yet shall they hear her proudly own
  The cause in which we fell.

The Lady paused, and then again
Resumed the lay in loftier strain.

XXIV.

Let our halls and towers decay,
  Be our name and line forgot,
Lands and manors pass away,—
  We but share our monarch's lot.
If no more our annals show
  Battles won and banners taken,
Still in death, defeat, and woe,
  Ours be loyalty unshaken!

Constant still in danger's hour,
  Princes owned our fathers' aid;
Lands and honours, wealth and power,
  Well their loyalty repaid.
Perish wealth, and power, and pride!
  Mortal boons by mortals given;
But let Constancy abide,
  Constancy's the gift of heaven.

XXV.

While thus Matilda's lay was heard,
A thousand thoughts in Edmund stirred.
In peasant life he might have known
As fair a face, as sweet a tone;
But village notes could ne'er supply
That rich and varied melody,
And ne'er in cottage maid was seen
The easy dignity of mien,

Claiming respect yet waving state,
That marks the daughters of the great.
Yet not, perchance, had these alone
His scheme of purposed guilt o'erthrown;
But, while her energy of mind
Superior rose to griefs combined,
Lending its kindling to her eye,
Giving her form new majesty,—
To Edmund's thought Matilda seemed
The very object he had dreamed,
When, long ere guilt his soul had known,
In Winston bowers he mused alone,
Taxing his fancy to combine
The face, the air, the voice divine,
Of some fair princess of romance,
Who claims the aid of hero's lance.

XXVI.

"Such was my vision!" Edmund thought;
"And have I, then, the ruin wrought
Of such a maid, that fancy ne'er
In fairest vision formed her peer?
Was it my hand, that could unclose
The postern to her ruthless foes?
Foes, lost to honour, law, and faith,
Their kindest mercy sudden death!
Have I done this? I! who have swore,
That if the globe such angel bore,
I would have traced its circle broad,
To kiss the ground on which she trod!—
And now—O! would that earth would rive,
And close upon me while alive!—
Is there no hope? is all then lost?—
Bertram's already on his post!

Even now, beside the hall's arched door,
I saw his shadow cross the floor!
He was to wait my signal strain—
A little respite thus we gain:—
By what I heard the menials say,
Young Wycliffe's troop are on their way—
Alarm precipitates the crime!
My harp must wear away the time."—
And then, in accents faint and low,
He faultered forth a tale of woe.

XXVII.

BALLAD.

" And whither would you lead me then?"
  Quoth the Friar of orders gray;
And the ruffians twain replied again,
  " By a dying woman to pray."—

"I see," he said, "a lovely sight,
A sight bodes little harm,
A lady as a lily bright,
With an infant on her arm."—

"Then do thine office, Friar gray,
And see thou shrive her free!
Else shall the sprite, that parts to-night,
Fling all its guilt on thee.

"Let mass be said, and trentals read,
When thou'rt to convent gone,
And bid the bell of St Benedict
Toll out its deepest tone."—

The shrift is done, the Friar is gone,
Blindfolded as he came—

Next morning, all in Littlecote-hall
Were weeping for their dame.

Wild Darrell is an altered man,
The village crones can tell;
He looks pale as clay, and strives to pray,
If he hears the convent bell.

If prince or peer cross Darrell's way,
He'll beard him in his pride—
If he meet a Friar of orders gray,
He droops and turns aside.

XXVIII.

"Harper! methinks thy magic lays,"
Matilda said, "can goblins raise!
Well nigh my fancy can discern,
Near the dark porch, a visage stern;

E'en now, in yonder shadowy nook
I see it!—Redmond, Wilfrid, look!—
A human form distinct and clear—
God, for thy mercy!—It draws near!"—
She saw too true. Stride after stride,
The centre of that chamber wide
Fierce Bertram gained; then made a stand,
And, proudly waving with his hand,
Thundered—"Be still, upon your lives!
He bleeds who speaks, he dies who strives."—
Behind their chief, the robber crew
Forth from the darkened portal drew,
In silence—save that echo dread
Returned their heavy measured tread.
The lamp's uncertain lustre gave
Their arms to gleam, their plumes to wave;
File after file in order pass,
Like forms on Banquo's mystic glass.

Then, halting at their leader's sign,
At once they formed and curved their line,
Hemming within its crescent drear
Their victims, like a herd of deer.
Another sign, and to the aim
Levelled at once their musquets came,
As waiting but their chieftain's word,
To make their fatal volley heard.

XXIX.

Back in a heap the menials drew,
Yet, even in mortal terror, true,
Their pale and startled groupe oppose
Between Matilda and the foes.
"O haste thee, Wilfrid!" Redmond cried;
"Undo that wicket by thy side!
Bear hence Matilda—gain the wood—
The pass may be a while made good—

Thy band, ere this, must sure be nigh—
O speak not—dally not—but fly!"—
While yet the crowd their motions hide,
Through the low wicket-door they glide.
Through vaulted passages they wind,
In Gothic intricacy twined;
Wilfrid half led, and half he bore,
Matilda to the postern door,
And safe beneath the forest-tree
The Lady stands at liberty.
The moon-beams, the fresh gale's caress,
Renewed suspended consciousness :—
"Where's Redmond?" eagerly she cries;
"Thou answer'st not—he dies! he dies!
And thou hast left him, all bereft
Of mortal aid—with murderers left!—
I know it well—he would not yield
His sword to man—his doom is sealed!

For my scorned life, which thou hast bought
At price of his, I thank thee not."—

XXX.

The unjust reproach, the angry look,
The heart of Wilfrid could not brook.
"Lady," he said, "my band so near,
In safety thou may'st rest thee here.
For Redmond's death thou shalt not mourn,
If mine can buy his safe return."—
He turned away—his heart throbbed high,
The tear was bursting from his eye.
The sense of her injustice pressed
Upon the maid's distracted breast,—
"Stay, Wilfrid, stay! all aid is vain!"—
He heard, but turned him not again;
And now he gains the postern door,
Now enters—and is seen no more.

XXXI.

With all the agony that e'er
Was gendered 'twixt suspense and fear,
She watched the line of windows tall
Whose Gothic lattice lights the hall,
Distinguished by the paly red
The lamps in dim reflection shed,
While all beside in wan moon-light
Each grated casement glimmered white.
No sight of harm, no sound of ill,
It is a deep and midnight still.
Who looked upon the scene had guessed
All in the castle were at rest:
When sudden on the windows shone
A lightning flash, just seen and gone!
A shot is heard—Again the flame
Flashed thick and fast—a volley came!

Then echoed wildly, from within,
Of shout and scream the mingled din,
And weapon-clash, and maddening cry
Of those who kill, and those who die!
As filled the hall with sulphurous smoke,
More red, more dark, the death-flash broke,
And forms were on the lattice cast,
That struck, or struggled, as they past.

XXXII.

What sounds upon the midnight wind
Approach so rapidly behind?
It is, it is, the tramp of steeds!
Matilda hears the sound, she speeds,
Seizes upon the leader's rein—
"O haste to aid, ere aid be vain!
Fly to the postern—gain the hall!"—
From saddle spring the troopers all;

Their gallant steeds, at liberty,
Run wild along the moon-light lea.
But, ere they burst upon the scene,
Full stubborn had the conflict been.
When Bertram marked Matilda's flight,
It gave the signal for the fight;
And Rokeby's veterans, seamed with scars
Of Scotland's and of Erin's wars,
Their momentary panic o'er,
Stood to the arms which then they bore;
(For they were weaponed, and prepared
Their mistress on her way to guard.)
Then cheered them to the fight O'Neale,
Then pealed the shot, and clashed the steel;
The war-smoke soon with sable breath
Darkened the scene of blood and death,
While on the few defenders close
The Bandits with redoubled blows,

And, twice driven back, yet fierce and fell
Renew the charge with frantic yell.

XXXIII.

Wilfrid has fallen—but o'er him stood
Young Redmond, soiled with smoke and blood,
Cheering his mates, with heart and hand
Still to make good their desperate stand.
" Up, comrades, up! in Rokeby halls
Ne'er be it said our courage falls.
What! faint ye for their savage cry,
Or do the smoke-wreaths daunt your eye?
These rafters have returned a shout
As loud at Rokeby's wassail route,
As thick a smoke these hearths have given
At Hallowtide or Christmas even.
Stand to it yet! renew the fight,
For Rokeby's and Matilda's right!

These slaves! they dare not, hand to hand,
Bide buffet from a true man's brand."—
Impetuous, active, fierce, and young,
Upon the advancing foes he sprung.
Woe to the wretch at whom is bent
His brandished faulchion's sheer descent!
Backward they scattered as he came,
Like wolves before the levin flame,
When, 'mid their howling conclave driven,
Hath glanced the thunderbolt of heaven.
Bertram rushed on—but Harpool clasp'd
His knees, although in death he gasp'd,
His falling corpse before him flung,
And round the trammelled ruffian clung.
Just then, the soldiers filled the dome,
And, shouting, charged the felons home
So fiercely, that, in panic dread,
They broke, they yielded, fell, or fled.

Bertram's stern voice they heed no more,
Though heard above the battle's roar,
While, trampling down the dying man,
He strove, with vollied threat and ban,
In scorn of odds, in fate's despite,
To rally up the desperate fight.

XXXIV.

Soon murkier clouds the hall enfold,
Than ere from battle-thunders rolled;
So dense, the combatants scarce know
To aim or to avoid the blow.
Smothering and blindfold grows the fight—
But soon shall dawn a dismal light!
'Mid cries, and clashing arms, there came
The hollow sound of rushing flame;
New horrors on the tumult dire
Arise—the castle is on fire!

Doubtful, if chance had cast the brand,
Or frantic Bertram's desperate hand.
Matilda saw—for frequent broke
From the dim casements gusts of smoke.
Yon tower, which late so clear defined
On the fair hemisphere reclined,
That, pencilled on its azure pure,
The eye could count each embrazure,
Now, swathed within the sweeping cloud,
Seems giant-spectre in his shroud;
Till, from each loop-hole flashing light,
A spout of fire shines ruddy bright,
And, gathering to united glare,
Streams high into the midnight air,
A dismal beacon, far and wide
That wakened Greta's slumbering side.
Soon all beneath, through gallery long,
And pendent arch, the fire flashed strong,

Snatching whatever could maintain,
Raise, or extend, its furious reign,
Startling, with closer cause of dread,
The females who the conflict fled,
And now rushed forth upon the plain,
Filling the air with clamours vain.

XXXV.

But ceased not yet, the hall within,
The shriek, the shout, the carnage-din,
Till bursting lattices give proof
The flames have caught the raftered roof.
What! wait they till its beams amain
Crash on the slayers and the slain?
The alarm is caught—the draw-bridge falls,
The warriors hurry from the walls,
But, by the conflagration's light,
Upon the lawn renew the fight.

Each straggling felon down was hewed,
Not one could gain the sheltering wood;
But forth the affrighted Harper sprung,
And to Matilda's robe he clung.
Her shriek, entreaty, and command,
Stopped the pursuer's lifted hand.
Denzil and he alive were ta'en;
The rest, save Bertram, all are slain.

XXXVI.

And where is Bertram?—Soaring high,
The general flame ascends the sky;
In gathered group the soldiers gaze
Upon the broad and roaring blaze,
When, like infernal dæmon, sent
Red from his penal element,
To plague and to pollute the air,—
His face all gore, on fire his hair,

Forth from the central mass of smoke
The giant form of Bertram broke!
His brandished sword on high he rears,
Then plunged among opposing spears;
Round his left arm his mantle truss'd
Received and foiled three lances' thrust;
Nor these his headlong course withstood,
Like reeds he snapped the tough ash wood.
In vain his foes around him clung;
With matchless force aside he flung
Their boldest,—as the bull, at bay,
Tosses the ban-dogs from his way.
Through forty foes his path he made,
And safely gained the forest glade.

XXXVI.

Scarce was this final conflict o'er,
When from the postern Redmond bore

Wilfrid, who, as of life bereft,
Had in the fatal hall been left,
Deserted there by all his train;
But Redmond saw, and turned again.—
Beneath an oak he laid him down,
That in the blaze gleamed ruddy brown,
And then his mantle's clasp undid;
Matilda held his drooping head,
Till, given to breathe the freer air,
Returning life repaid their care.
He gazed on them with heavy sigh,—
" I could have wished even thus to die!"—
No more he said—for now with speed
Each trooper had regained his steed;
The ready palfreys stood arrayed,
For Redmond and for Rokeby's Maid;
Two Wilfrid on his horse sustain,
One leads his charger by the rein.

But oft Matilda looked behind,
As up the vale of Tees they wind,
Where far the mansion of her sires
Beaconed the dale with midnight fires.
In gloomy arch above them spread,
The clouded heaven lowered bloody red;
Beneath, in sombre light, the flood
Appeared to roll in waves of blood.
Then, one by one, was heard to fall
The tower, the donjon-keep, the hall.
Each rushing down with thunder sound,
A space the conflagration drowned;
Till, gathering strength, again it rose,
Announced its triumph in its close,
Shook wide its light the landscape o'er,
Then sunk—and Rokeby was no more!

END OF CANTO FIFTH.

ROKEBY.

CANTO SIXTH.

ROKEBY.

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

THE summer sun, whose early power
Was wont to gild Matilda's bower,
And rouse her with his matin ray
Her duteous orisons to pay,
That morning sun has three times seen
The flowers unfold on Rokeby green,
But sees no more the slumbers fly
From fair Matilda's hazel eye;

That morning sun has three times broke
On Rokeby's glades of elm and oak,
But, rising from their sylvan screen,
Marks no gray turrets glance between!
A shapeless mass lie keep and tower,
That, hissing to the morning shower,
Can but with smouldering vapour pay
The early smile of summer day.
The peasant, to his labour bound,
Pauses to view the blackened mound,
Striving, amid the ruined space,
Each well-remembered spot to trace.
That length of frail and fire-scorched wall
Once screened the hospitable hall;
When yonder broken arch was whole,
'Twas there was dealt the weekly dole;
And where yon tottering columns nod,
The chapel sent the hymn to God.

So flits the world's uncertain span!
Nor zeal for God, nor love for man,
Gives mortal monuments a date
Beyond the power of Time and Fate.
The towers must share the builder's doom;
Ruin is theirs, and his a tomb:
But better boon benignant Heaven
To Faith and Charity has given,
And bids the Christian hope sublime
Transcend the bounds of Fate and Time.

II.

Now the third night of summer came,
Since that which witnessed Rokeby's flame.
On Brignal cliffs and Scargill brake
The owlet's homilies awake,
The bittern screamed from rush and flag,
The raven slumbered on his crag,

Forth from his den the otter drew,—
Grayling and trout their tyrant knew,
As between reed and sedge he peers,
With fierce round snout and sharpened ears,
Or, prowling by the moon-beam cool,
Watches the stream or swims the pool;—
Perched on his wonted eyrie high,
Sleep sealed the tercelet's wearied eye,
That all the day had watched so well,
The cushat dart across the dell.
In dubious beam reflected shone
That lofty cliff of pale grey stone,
Beside whose base the secret cave
To rapine late a refuge gave.
The crag's wild crest of copse and yew
On Greta's breast dark shadows threw;
Shadows that met or shunned the sight,
With every change of fitful light;

As hope and fear alternate chase
Our course through life's uncertain race.

III.

Gliding by crag and copse-wood green,
A solitary Form was seen
To trace with stealthy pace the wold,
Like fox that seeks the midnight fold,
And pauses oft, and cowers dismayed,
At every breath that stirs the shade.
He passes now the ivy bush,
The owl has seen him and is hush;
He passes now the doddered oak,
Ye heard the startled raven croak;
Lower and lower he descends,
Rustle the leaves, the brush-wood bends;
The otter hears him tread the shore,
And dives, and is beheld no more;

And by the cliff of pale grey stone
The midnight wanderer stands alone.
Methinks, that by the moon we trace
A well-remembered form and face!
That stripling shape, that cheek so pale,
Combine to tell a rueful tale,
Of powers misused, of passion's force,
Of guilt, of grief, and of remorse!
'Tis Edmund's eye, at every sound
That flings that guilty glance around;
'Tis Edmund's trembling haste divides
The brush-wood that the cavern hides,
And, when its narrow porch lies bare,
'Tis Edmund's form that enters there.

IV.

His flint and steel have sparkled bright,
A lamp hath lent the cavern light.

Fearful and quick his eye surveys
Each angle of the gloomy maze.
Since last he left that stern abode,
It seemed as none its floor had trode;
Untouched appeared the various spoil,
The purchase of his comrades' toil;
Masques and disguises grimed with mud,
Arms broken and defiled with blood,
And all the nameless tools that aid
Night-felons in their lawless trade,
Upon the gloomy walls were hung,
Or lay in nooks obscurely flung.
Still on the sordid board appear
The reliques of the noontide cheer;
Flaggons and emptied flasks were there,
And bench o'erthrown, and shattered chair;
And all around the semblance showed,
As when the final revel glowed,

When the red sun was setting fast,
And parting pledge Guy Denzil past.
To Rokeby treasure-vaults! they quaffed,
And shouted loud and wildly laughed,
Poured maddening from the rocky door,
And parted—to return no more!
They found in Rokeby vaults their doom,—
A bloody death, a burning tomb.

V.

There his own peasant dress he spies,
Doffed to assume that quaint disguise,
And shuddering thought upon his glee,
When pranked in garb of minstrelsy.
"O be the fatal art accursed,"
He cried, "that moved my folly first,
Till bribed by bandits' base applause,
I burst through God's and Nature's laws!

Three summer days are scantly past
Since I have trod this cavern last,
A thoughtless wretch, and prompt to err—
But O as yet no murderer!
Even now I list my comrades' cheer,
That general laugh is in mine ear,
Which raised my pulse and steeled my heart,
As I rehearsed my treacherous part—
And would that all since then could seem
The phantom of a fever's dream!
But fatal Memory notes too well
The horrors of the dying yell,
That from my desperate comrades broke,
When flashed the fire and rolled the smoke,
When the avengers shouting came,
And hemmed us 'twixt the sword and flame!
My frantic flight—the lifted brand—
That angel's interposing hand!——

If for my life from slaughter freed,
I yet could pay some grateful meed!—
Perchance this object of my quest
May aid"—he turned, nor spoke the rest.

VI.

Due northward from the rugged hearth,
With paces five he metes the earth,
Then toiled with mattock to explore
The entrails of the cavern floor,
Nor paused till, deep beneath the ground,
His search a small steel casket found.
Just as he stooped to loose its hasp,
His shoulder felt a giant grasp;
He started, and looked up aghast,
Then shrieked—'twas Bertram held him fast.
"Fear not!" he said; but who could hear
That deep stern voice, and cease to fear?

"Fear not!—by heaven he shakes as much
As partridge in the falcon's clutch!"—
He raised him, and unloosed his hold,
While from the opening casket rolled
A chain and reliquaire of gold.
Bertram beheld it with surprise,
Gazed on its fashion and device,
Then, cheering Edmund as he could,
Somewhat he smoothed his rugged mood;
For still the youth's half-lifted eye
Quivered with terror's agony,
And sidelong glanced, as to explore,
In meditated flight, the door.
"Sit," Bertram said, "from danger free;
Thou canst not, and thou shalt not, flee.
Chance brings me hither; hill and plain
I've sought for refuge-place in vain.

And tell me now, thou aguish boy,
What makest thou here? what means this toy?
Denzil and thou, I marked, were ta'en;
What lucky chance unbound your chain?
I deemed, long since on Baliol's tower,
Your heads were warped with sun and shower.
Tell me the whole—and mark! nought e'er
Chafes me like falsehood, or like fear."—
Gathering his courage to his aid,
But trembling still, the youth obeyed.

VII.

"Denzil and I two nights passed o'er,
In fetters on the dungeon floor.
A guest the third sad morrow brought;
Our hold dark Oswald Wycliffe sought,
And eyed my comrade long askance,
With fixed and penetrating glance.

'Guy Denzil art thou called ?'—'The same.'—
'At court who served wild Buckinghame;
Thence banished, won a keeper's place,
So Villiers willed, in Marwood-chase;
That lost—I need not tell thee why—
Thou madest thy wit thy wants supply,
Then fought for Rokeby :—have I guessed
My prisoner right ?'—'At thy behest.'—
He paused awhile, and then went on
With low and confidential tone;
Me, as I judge, not then he saw,
Close nestled in my couch of straw.—
'List to me, Guy. Thou know'st the great
Have frequent need of what they hate
Hence, in their favour oft we see
Unscrupled, useful men like thee.
Were I disposed to bid thee live,
What pledge of faith hast thou to give ?'—

VIII.

" The ready fiend, who never yet
Hath failed to sharpen Denzil's wit,
Prompted his lie—' His only child
Should rest his pledge.'—The Baron smiled,
And turned to me—' Thou art his son ?'
I bowed—our fetters were undone,
And we were led to hear apart
A dreadful lesson of his art.
Wilfrid, he said, his heir and son,
Had fair Matilda's favour won;
And long since had their union been,
But for her father's bigot spleen,
Whose brute and blindfold party rage
Would, force per force, her hand engage
To a base kerne of Irish earth,
Unknown his lineage and his birth,

Save that a dying ruffian bore
The infant brat to Rokeby door.
Gentle restraint, he said, would lead
Old Rokeby to enlarge his creed;
But fair occasion he must find
For such restraint well-meant and kind,
The knight being rendered to his charge
But as a prisoner at large.

IX.

" He school'd us in a well-forged tale,
Of scheme the castle walls to scale,
To which was leagued each cavalier,
That dwells upon the Tyne and Wear;
That Rokeby, his parole forgot,
Had dealt with us to aid the plot.
Such was the charge, which Denzil's zeal
Of hate to Rokeby and O'Neale

Proffered, as witness, to make good,
Even though the forfeit were their blood.
I scrupled, until o'er and o'er
His prisoners' safety Wycliffe swore,
And then—alas! what needs there more?
I knew I should not live to say
The proffer I refused that day;
Ashamed to live, yet loth to die,
I soiled me with their infamy!"—
"Poor youth," said Bertram, "wavering st[illegible]
Unfit alike for good or ill!
But what fell next?"—"Soon as at large
Was scrolled and signed our fatal charge,
There never yet, on tragic stage,
Was seen so well a painted rage
As Oswald's shewed! with loud alarm,
He called his garrison to arm;

From tower to tower, from post to post,
He hurried as if all were lost;
Consigned to dungeon and to chain
The good old knight and all his train,
Warned each suspected cavalier,
Within his limits, to appear
To-morrow, at the hour of noon,
In the high church of Eglistone."—

X.

"Of Eglistone! Even now I passed,"
Said Bertram, "as the night closed fast;
Torches and cressets gleamed around,
I heard the saw and hammer sound,
And I could mark they toiled to raise
A scaffold, hung with sable baize,
Which the grim headsman's scene displayed,
Block, axe, and saw-dust, ready laid.

Some evil deed will there be done,
Unless Matilda wed his son;—
She loves him not—'tis shrewdly guessed
That Redmond rules the damsel's breast.
This is a turn of Oswald's skill;
But I may meet, and foil him still!——
How camest thou to thy freedom?"—"There
Lies mystery more dark and rare.
In midst of Wycliffe's well-feigned rage,
A scroll was offered by a page,
Who told, a muffled horseman late
Had left it at the castle-gate.
He broke the seal—his cheek shewed change,
Sudden, portentous, wild, and strange;
The mimic passion of his eye
Was turned to actual agony,
His hand like summer-sapling shook,
Terror and guilt were in his look.

Denzil he judged, in time of need,
Fit counsellor for evil deed,
And thus apart his counsel broke,
While with a ghastly smile he spoke.

XI.

"As, in the pageants of the stage,
The dead awake in this wild age,
Mortham,—whom all men deemed decreed
In his own deadly snare to bleed,
Slain by a bravo, whom, o'er sea,
He trained to aid in murthering me,—
Mortham has 'scaped; the coward shot
The steed, but harmed the rider nought."—
Here, with an execration fell,
Bertram leaped up, and paced the cell;—
"Thine own grey head, or bosom dark,"
He muttered, "may be surer mark!"—

Then sate, and signed to Edmund, pale
With terror, to resume his tale.
" Wycliffe went on :—' Mark with what flights
Of wildered reverie he writes:

THE LETTER.

" Ruler of Mortham's destiny!
Though dead, thy victim lives to thee.
Once had he all that binds to life,
A lovely child, a lovelier wife;
Wealth, fame, and friendship, were his own—
Thou gavest the word, and they are flown.
Mark how he pays thee :—to thy hand
He yields his honours and his land,
One boon premised;—Restore his child!
And, from his native land exiled,
Mortham no more returns, to claim
His lands, his honours, or his name;

Refuse him this, and from the slain
Thou shalt see Mortham rise again."—

XII.

" This billet while the Baron read,
His faultering accents shewed his dread;
He pressed his forehead with his palm,
Then took a scornful tone and calm;
'Wild as the winds, as billows wild!
What wot I of his spouse or child?
Hither he brought a joyous dame,
Unknown her lineage or her name:
Her, in some frantic fit, he slew;
The nurse and child in fear withdrew.
Heaven be my witness, wist I where
To find this youth, my kinsman's heir,—
Unguerdon'd, I would give with joy
The father's arms to fold his boy,

And Mortham's lands and towers resign,
To the just heir of Mortham's line.'—
Thou know'st that scarcely e'en his fear
Suppresses Denzil's cynic sneer;—
'Then happy is thy vassal's part,'
He said, 'to ease his patron's heart!
In thine own jailor's watchful care
Lies Mortham's just and rightful heir;
Thy generous wish is fully won,—
Redmond O'Neale is Mortham's son.'—

XIII.

"Up starting with a frenzied look,
His clenched hand the Baron shook:
'Is Hell at work? or dost thou rave,
Or darest thou palter with me, slave!
Perchance thou wotst not, Barnard's towers
Have racks, of strange and ghastly powers.—

Denzil, who well his safety knew,
Firmly rejoined, 'I tell thee true.
Thy racks could give thee but to know
The proofs, which I, untortured, show.—
It chanced upon a winter night,
When early snow made Stanemore white,
That very night, when first of all
Redmond O'Neale saw Rokeby-hall,
It was my goodly lot to gain
A reliquary and a chain,
Twisted and chased of massive gold.
—Demand not how the prize I hold!
It was not given, nor lent, nor sold.—
Gilt tablets to the chain were hung,
With letters in the Irish tongue.
I hid my spoil, for there was need
That I should leave the land with speed;

Nor then I deemed it safe to bear
On mine own person gems so rare.
Small heed I of the tablets took,
But since have spelled them by the book,
When some sojourn in Erin's land
Of their wild speech had given command.
But darkling was the sense; the phrase
And language those of other days,
Involved of purpose, as to foil
An interloper's prying toil.
The words, but not the sense, I knew,
Till fortune gave the guiding clue.

XIV.

" Three days since, was that clue revealed,
In Thorsgill as I lay concealed,
And heard at full when Rokeby's maid
Her uncle's history displayed;

And now I can interpret well
Each syllable the tablets tell.
Mark then: Fair Edith was the joy
Of old O'Neale of Clandeboy,
But from her sire and country fled,
In secret Mortham's lord to wed.
O'Neale, his first resentment o'er,
Dispatch'd his son to Greta's shore,
Enjoining he should make him known
(Until his farther will were shown,)
To Edith, but to her alone.
What of their ill-starred meeting fell,
Lord Wycliffe knows, and none so well.

XV.

" O'Neale it was, who, in despair,
Robbed Mortham of his infant heir;

He bred him in their nurture wild,
And called him murdered Connal's child.
Soon died the nurse; the clan believed
What from their chieftain they received.
His purpose was, that ne'er again
The boy should cross the Irish main,
But, like his mountain sires, enjoy
The woods and wastes of Clandeboy.
Then on the land wild troubles came,
And stronger chieftains urged a claim,
And wrested from the old man's hands
His native towers, his father's lands.
Unable then, amid the strife,
To guard young Redmond's rights or life,
Late and reluctant he restores
The infant to his native shores,

With goodly gifts and letters stored,
With many a deep conjuring word,
To Mortham, and to Rokeby's lord.
Nought knew the clod of Irish earth,
Who was the guide, of Redmond's birth;
But deemed his chief's commands were laid
On both, by both to be obeyed.
How he was wounded by the way,
I need not, and I list not say."—

XVII.

" A wond'rous tale! and grant it true,
What,' Wycliffe answered, ' might I do?
Heaven knows, as willingly as now
I raise the bonnet from my brow,
Would I my kinsman's manors fair
Restore to Mortham, or his heir;

But Mortham is distraught—O'Neale
Has drawn for tyranny his steel,
Malignant to our rightful Cause,
And trained in Rome's delusive laws.
Hark thee apart!'—They whispered long,
Till Denzil's voice grew bold and strong:—
'My proofs! I never will,' he said,
'Shew mortal man where they are laid.
Nor hope discovery to foreclose,
By giving me to feed the crows;
For I have mates at large, who know
Where I am wont such toys to stow.
Free me from peril and from band,
These tablets are at thy command;
Nor were it hard to form some train,
To wile old Mortham o'er the main.
Then, lunatic's nor papist's hand
Should wrest from thine the goodly land.'—

—‘ I like thy wit,’ said Wycliffe, ‘ well;
But here in hostage shalt thou dwell.
Thy son, unless my purpose err,
May prove the trustier messenger.
A scroll to Mortham shall he bear
From me, and fetch these tokens rare.
Gold shalt thou have, and that good store,
And freedom, his commission o'er;
But if his faith should chance to fail,
The gibbet frees thee from the jail.’——

XVIII.

“ Mesh'd in the net himself had twined,
What subterfuge could Denzil find?
He told me, with reluctant sigh,
That hidden here the tokens lie;
Conjured my swift return and aid,
By all he scoffed and disobeyed;

And looked as if the noose were tied,
And I the priest who left his side.
This scroll for Mortham, Wycliffe gave,
Whom I must seek by Greta's wave,
Or in the hut where chief he hides,
Where Thorsgill's forester resides,
(Thence chanced it, wandering in the glade,
That he descried our ambuscade.)
I was dismissed as evening fell,
And reached but now this rocky cell."—
"Give Oswald's letter."—Bertram read,
And tore it fiercely, shred by shred:—
"All lies and villainy! to blind
His noble kinsman's generous mind,
And train him on from day to day,
Till he can take his life away.—
And now, declare thy purpose, youth,
Nor dare to answer, save the truth;

If aught I mark of Denzil's art,
I'll tear the secret from thy heart!"—

XIX.

"It needs not. I renounce," he said,
"My tutor and his deadly trade.
Fixed was my purpose to declare
To Mortham, Redmond is his heir,
To tell him in what risque he stands,
And yield these tokens to his hands.
Fixed was my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done,
And fixed it rests—if I survive
This night, and leave this cave alive."—
"And Denzil?"—"Let them ply the rack,
Even till his joints and sinews crack!
If Oswald tear him limb from limb,
What ruth can Denzil claim from him,

Whose thoughtless youth he led astray,
And damned to this unhallowed way?
He school'd me, faith and vows were vain;
Now let my master reap his gain."—
"True," answered Bertram, "'tis his meed;
There's retribution in the deed.
But thou—thou art not for our course,
Hast fear, hast pity, hast remorse;
And he, with us the gale who braves,
Must heave such cargo to the waves,
Or lag with overloaded prore
While barks unburthened reach the shore."—

XX.

He paused, and, stretching him at length,
Seemed to repose his bulky strength.
Communing with his secret mind,
As half he sate, and half reclined,

One ample hand his forehead pressed,
And one was dropped across his breast.
The shaggy eye-brows deeper came
Above his eyes of swarthy flame;
His lip of pride awhile forbore
The haughty curve till then it wore;
The unaltered fierceness of his look
A shade of darkened sadness took,—
For dark and sad a presage pressed
Resistlessly on Bertram's breast,—
And when he spoke, his wonted tone,
So fierce, abrupt, and brief, was gone.
His voice was steady, low, and deep,
Like distant waves when breezes sleep;
And sorrow mixed with Edmund's fear,
Its low unbroken depth to hear.

XXI.

"Edmund, in thy sad tale I find
The woe that warped my patron's mind;
Twould wake the fountains of the eye
In other men, but mine are dry.
Mortham must never see the fool,
That sold himself base Wycliffe's tool!
Yet less from thirst of sordid gain,
Than to avenge supposed disdain.
Say, Bertram rues his fault;—a word,
Till now, from Bertram never heard:
Say, too, that Mortham's lord he prays
To think but on their former days;
On Quariana's beach and rock,
On Cayo's bursting battle-shock,
On Darien's sands and deadly dew,
And on the dart Tlatzeca threw;—

Perchance my patron yet may hear
More that may grace his comrade's bier.
My soul hath felt a secret weight,
A warning of approaching fate:
A priest had said, Return, repent!
As well to bid that rock be rent.
Firm as that flint I face mine end;
My heart may burst, but cannot bend.

XXII.

"The dawning of my youth, with awe
And prophecy, the Dalesmen saw;
For over Redesdale it came,
As bodeful as their beacon-flame.
Edmund, thy years were scarcely mine,
When, challenging the clans of Tyne
To bring their best my brand to prove,
O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove;

But Tynedale, nor in tower nor town,
Held champion meet to take it down.
My noontide India may declare;
Like her fierce Sun, I fired the air!
Like him, to wood and cave bade fly
Her natives, from mine angry eye.
Panama's maids shall long look pale
When Risingham inspires the tale;
Chili's dark matrons long shall tame
The froward child with Bertram's name.
And now, my race of terror run,
Mine be the eve of tropic Sun!
No pale gradations quench his ray,
No twilight dews his wrath allay;
With disk like battle-target red,
He rushes to his burning bed,
Dyes the wide wave with bloody light,
Then sinks at once—and all is night.

XXIII.

" Now to thy mission, Edmund. Fly,
Seek Mortham out, and bid him hie
To Richmond, where his troops are laid,
And lead his force to Redmond's aid.
Say, till he reaches Eglistone,
A friend will watch to guard his son.
Now, fare thee well ; for night draws on,
And I would rest me here alone."—
Despite his ill-dissembled fear,
There swam in Edmund's eye a tear;
A tribute to the courage high,
Which stooped not in extremity,
But strove, irregularly great,
To triumph o'er approaching fate!
Bertram beheld the dew-drop start,
It almost touched his iron heart :—

"I did not think there lived," he said,
"One, who would tear for Bertram shed."—
He loosened then his baldrick's hold,
A buckle broad of massive gold;—
"Of all the spoil that paid his pains,
But this with Risingham remains;
And this, dear Edmund, thou shalt take,
And wear it long for Bertram's sake.
Once more—to Mortham speed amain;
Farewell! and turn thee not again."—

XXIV.

The night has yielded to the morn,
And far the hours of prime are worn.
Oswald, who, since the dawn of day,
Had cursed his messenger's delay,
Impatient questioned now his train,
"Was Denzil's son returned again?"—

5

It chanced there answered of the crew,
A menial, who young Edmund knew:
"No son of Denzil this," he said,
"A peasant boy from Winston glade,
For song and minstrelsy renowned,
And knavish pranks, the hamlets round."—
—"Not Denzil's son!—from Winston vale!—
Then it was false, that specious tale;
Or, worse—he hath dispatched the youth
To show to Mortham's lord its truth.
Fool that I was!—but 'tis too late;
This is the very turn of fate!—
The tale, or true or false, relies
On Denzil's evidence:—He dies!—
—Ho! Provost Martial! instantly
Lead Denzil to the gallows tree!
Allow him not a parting word;
Short be the shrift, and sure the cord!

Then let his gory head appal
Marauders from the castle wall.
Lead forth thy guard, that duty done,
With best dispatch to Eglistone.—
—Basil, tell Wilfrid he must straight
Attend me at the castle-gate."—

XXV.

"Alas!" the old domestic said,
And shook his venerable head,
"Alas, my Lord! full ill to-day
May my young master brook the way!
The leech has spoke with grave alarm,
Of unseen hurt, of secret harm,
Of sorrow lurking at his heart,
That mars and lets his healing art."—
—"Tush, tell not me!—Romantic boys
Pine themselves sick for airy toys.

I will find cure for Wilfrid soon;
Bid him for Eglistone be boune,
And quick—I hear the dull death-drum
Tell Denzil's hour of fate is come."—
He paused with scornful smile, and then
Resumed his train of thought agen.
"Now comes my fortune's crisis near!
Entreaty boots not—instant fear,
Nought else, can bend Matilda's pride,
Or win her to be Wilfrid's bride.
But when she sees the scaffold placed,
With axe and block and headsman graced,
And when she deems, that to deny
Dooms Redmond and her sire to die,
She must give way.—Then, were the line
Of Rokeby once combined with mine,
I gain the weather-gage of fate!
If Mortham come, he comes too late,

While I, allied thus and prepared,
Bid him defiance to his beard.—
—If she prove stubborn, shall I dare
To drop the axe?—soft! pause we there.
Mortham still lives—yon youth may tell
His tale—and Fairfax loves him well;—
Else, wherefore should I now delay
To sweep this Redmond from my way?—
But she to piety per force
Must yield.—Without there! Sound to horse."—

XXVI.

'Twas bustle in the court below,—
"Mount, and march forward!"—forth they go,
Steeds neigh and trample all around,
Steel rings, spears glimmer, trumpets sound.—
Just then was sung his parting hymn;
And Denzil turned his eye-balls dim,

And scarcely conscious what he sees,
Follows the horsemen down the Tees,
And scarcely conscious what he hears,
The trumpets tingle in his ears.
O'er the long bridge they're sweeping now,
The van is hid by green-wood bough;
But ere the rearward had passed o'er,
Guy Denzil heard and saw no more!
One stroke, upon the castle bell,
To Oswald rung his dying knell.

XXVII.

O for that pencil, erst profuse
Of chivalry's emblazoned hues,
That traced, of old, in Woodstocke bower,
The pageant of the Leaf and Flower,
And bodied forth the tourney high,
Held for the hand of Emily!

Then might I paint the tumult broad,
That to the crowded abbey flowed,
And poured, as with an ocean's sound,
Into the church's ample bound!
Then might I shew each varying mien,
Exulting, woeful, or serene;
Indifference with his idiot stare,
And Sympathy with anxious air;
Paint the dejected Cavalier,
Doubtful, disarmed, and sad of cheer;
And his proud foe, whose formal eye
Claimed conquest now and mastery;
And the brute crowd, whose envious zeal
Huzzas each turn of Fortune's wheel,
And loudest shouts when lowest lie
Exalted worth, and station high.
Yet what may such a wish avail?
'Tis mine to tell an onward tale,

Hurrying, as best I can, along,
The hearers and the hasty song;—
Like traveller when approaching home,
Who sees the shades of evening come,
And must not now his course delay,
Or chuse the fair, but winding way;
Nay, scarcely may his pace suspend,
Where o'er his head the wildings bend,
To bless the breeze that cools his brow,
Or snatch a blossom from the bough.

XXVIII.

The reverend pile lay wild and waste,
Profaned, dishonoured, and defaced.
Through storied lattices no more
In softened light the sun-beams pour,
Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich
Of shrine, and monument, and niche.

The Civil fury of the time
Made sport of sacrilegious crime;
For dark Fanaticism rent
Altar, and screen, and ornament,
And peasant hands the tombs o'erthrew
Of Bowes, of Rokeby, and Fitz Hugh.
And now was seen unwonted sight,
In holy walls a scaffold dight!
Where once the priest, of grace divine
Dealt to his flock the mystic sign,
There stood the block displayed, and there
The headsman grim his hatchet bare;
And for the word of Hope and Faith,
Resounded loud a doom of death.
Thrice the fierce trumpet's breath was heard,
And echoed thrice the herald's word,
Dooming, for breach of martial laws,
And treason to the Commons' cause,

The Knight of Rokeby and O'Neale
To stoop their heads to block and steel.
The trumpets flourished high and shrill,
Then was a silence dead and still;
And silent prayers to heaven were cast,
And stifled sobs were bursting fast,
Till from the crowd begun to rise
Murmurs of sorrow or surprise,
And from the distant aisles there came
Deep-mutter'd threats, with Wycliffe's name.

XXIX.

But Oswald, guarded by his band,
Powerful in evil, waved his hand,
And bade Sedition's voice be dead,
On peril of the murmurer's head.
Then first his glance sought Rokeby's knight;
Who gazed on the tremendous sight,

As calm as if he came a guest
To kindred Baron's feudal feast,
As calm as if that trumpet-call
Were summons to the bannered hall;
Firm in his loyalty he stood,
And prompt to seal it with his blood.
With downcast look drew Oswald nigh,—
He durst not cope with Rokeby's eye!—
And said, with low and faultering breath,
"Thou know'st the terms of life and death."—
The Knight then turned, and sternly smiled;
"The maiden is mine only child,
Yet shall my blessing leave her head,
If with a traitor's son she wed."—
Then Redmond spoke; "The life of one
Might thy malignity atone,
On me be flung a double guilt!
Spare Rokeby's blood, let mine be spilt!"—

Wycliffe had listened to his suit,
But dread prevailed, and he was mute.

XXX.

And now he pours his choice of fear
In secret on Matilda's ear;
" An union formed with me and mine,
Ensures the faith of Rokeby's line.
Consent, and all this dread array
Like morning dream shall pass away;
Refuse, and, by my duty pressed,
I give the word—thou know'st the rest."—
Matilda, still and motionless,
With terror heard the dread address,
Pale as the sheeted maid who dies
To hopeless love a sacrifice;
Then wrung her hands in agony,
And round her cast bewildered eye,

Now on the scaffold glanced, and now
On Wycliffe's unrelenting brow.
She veiled her face, and, with a voice
Scarce audible,—" I make my choice!
Spare but their lives!—for aught beside,
Let Wilfrid's doom my fate decide.
He once was generous!"---As she spoke,
Dark Wycliffe's joy in triumph broke:—
" Wilfrid, where loitered ye so late?—
Why upon Basil rest thy weight?
Art spell-bound by enchanter's wand?—
Kneel, kneel, and take her yielded hand;
Thank her with raptures, simple boy!
Should tears and trembling speak thy joy?"—
" O hush, my sire! to prayer and tear
Of mine thou hast refused thine ear;
But now the awful hour draws on,
When truth must speak in loftier tone."—

XXXI.

He took Matilda's hand:—" Dear maid!
Couldst thou so injure me," he said,
" Of thy poor friend so basely deem,
As blend him with this barbarous scheme?
Alas! my efforts, made in vain,
Might well have saved this added pain.
But now, bear witness earth and heaven,
That ne'er was hope to mortal given,
So twisted with the strings of life,
As this—to call Matilda wife!
I bid it now for ever part,
And with the effort bursts my heart."—
His feeble frame was worn so low,
With wounds, with watching, and with woe,
That nature could no more sustain
The agony of mental pain.

He kneeled—his lip her hand had pressed,—
Just then he felt the stern arrest;
Lower and lower sunk his head,—
They raised him,—but the life was fled!
Then first alarmed, his sire and train
Tried every aid, but tried in vain.
The soul, too soft its ills to bear,
Had left our mortal hemisphere,
And sought in better world the meed,
To blameless life by Heaven decreed.

XXXII.

The wretched sire beheld, aghast,
With Wilfrid all his projects past.
All turned and centered on his son,
On Wilfrid all—and he was gone.
"And I am childless now," he said,
"Childless, through that relentless maid!

A lifetime's arts, in vain essay'd,
Are bursting on their artist's head!—
Here lies my Wilfrid dead—and there
Comes hated Mortham for his heir,
Eager to knit in happy band
With Rokeby's heiress Redmond's hand.
And shall their triumph soar o'er all
The schemes deep-laid to work their fall?
No!---deeds, which prudence might not dare,
Appal not vengeance and despair.
The murderess weeps upon his bier—
I'll change to real that feigned tear!
They all shall share destruction's shock;—
Ho! lead the captives to the block!"—
But ill his provost could divine
His feelings, and forbore the sign.
"Slave! to the block!—or I, or they,
Shall face the judgement-seat this day!"—

XXXIII.

The outmost crowd have heard a sound,
Like horse's hoof on hardened ground;
Nearer it came, and yet more near,—
The very deaths-men paused to hear.
'Tis in the church-yard now—the tread
Hath waked the dwelling of the dead!
Fresh sod, and old sepulchral stone,
Return the tramp in varied tone.
All eyes upon the gate-way hung,
When through the Gothic arch there sprung
A Horseman armed, at headlong speed—
Sable his cloak, his plume, his steed.
Fire from the flinty floor was spurned,
The vaults unwonted clang returned!—
One instant's glance around he threw,
From saddle-bow his pistol drew.

Grimly determined was his look!
His charger with the spurs he strook—
All scattered backward as he came,
For all knew Bertram Risingham!
Three bounds that noble courser gave;
The first has reached the central nave,
The second cleared the chancel wide,
The third,—he was at Wycliffe's side.
Full levelled at the Baron's head,
Rung the report—the bullet sped—
And to his long account, and last,
Without a groan dark Oswald past!
All was so quick, that it might seem
A flash of lightning, or a dream.

XXXIV.

While yet the smoke the deed conceals,
Bertram his ready charger wheels;

But flounder'd on the pavement floor
The steed, and down the rider bore,
And, bursting in the headlong sway,
The faithless saddle-girths gave way.
'Twas while he toiled him to be freed,
And with the rein to raise the steed,
That from amazement's iron trance
All Wycliffe's soldiers waked at once.
Sword, halbert, musquet-butt, their blows
Hailed upon Bertram as he rose;
A score of pikes, with each a wound,
Bore down and pinned him to the ground.
But still his struggling force he rears,
'Gainst hacking brands and stabbing spears;
Thrice from assailants shook him free,
Once gained his feet, and twice his knee.
By tenfold odds oppressed at length,
Despite his struggles and his strength,

He took an hundred mortal wounds,
As mute as fox 'mongst mangling hounds;
And when he died, his parting groan
Had more of laughter than of moan!
—They gazed, as when a lion dies,
And hunters scarcely trust their eyes,
But bend their weapons on the slain,
Lest the grim king should rouse again!—
Then blow and insult some renewed,
And from the trunk the head had hewed,
But Basil's voice the deed forbade;
A mantle o'er the corse he laid:—
"Fell as he was in act and mind,
He left no bolder heart behind:
Then give him, for a soldier meet,
A soldier's cloak for winding sheet."—

XXXV.

No more of death and dying pang,
No more of trump and bugle clang,
Tho' through the sounding woods there come
Banner and bugle, trump and drum.
Armed with such powers as well had freed
Young Redmond at his utmost need,
And backed with such a band of horse
As might less ample powers enforce;
Possessed of every proof and sign
That gave an heir to Mortham's line,
And yielded to a father's arms
An image of his Edith's charms,—
Mortham is come, to hear and see
Of this strange morn the history.
What saw he?—not the church's floor,
Cumbered with dead and stained with gore;

What heard he ?—not the clamorous crowd,
That shout their gratulations loud;
Redmond he saw and heard alone,
Clasped him, and sobb'd, " My son, my son !"—

XXXVI.

This chanced upon a summer morn,
When yellow waved the heavy corn;
But when brown August o'er the land
Called forth the reapers' busy band,
A gladsome sight the sylvan road
From Eglistone to Mortham show'd.
A while the hardy rustic leaves
The task to bind and pile the sheaves,
And maids their sickles fling aside,
To gaze on bridegroom and on bride,
And Childhood's wondering group draws near,
And from the gleaner's hands the ear

Drops, while she folds them for a prayer
And blessing on the lovely pair.
'Twas then the Maid of Rokeby gave
Her plighted troth to Redmond brave;
And Teesdale can remember yet
How Fate to Virtue paid her debt,
And, for their troubles, bade them prove
A lengthened life of peace and love.

Time and Tide had thus their sway,
Yielding, like an April day,
Smiling noon for sullen morrow,
Years of joy for hours of sorrow!

END OF CANTO SIXTH.

NOTES.

NOTES TO CANTO FIRST.

Note I.

On Barnard's towers and Tees's stream, &c.—St. I. p. 1.

Barnard Castle, saith old Leland, "standeth stately upon Tees." It is founded upon a very high bank, and its ruins impend over the river, including within the area a circuit of six acres and upwards. This once magnificent fortress derives its name from its founder Barnard Baliol, the ancestor of the short and unfortunate dynasty of that name, which succeeded to the Scottish throne under the patronage of Edward I. and Edward III. Baliol's tower, afterwards mentioned in the poem, is a round tower of great size, situated at the western extremity of the building. It bears marks of great antiquity, and was remarkable for the curious construction of its vaulted roof, which has been lately greatly injured by the operations of some persons to whom the tower has been leased for the purpose of making patent shot! The prospect from the top of Baliol's tower commands a rich and magnificent view of the wooded valley of the Tees.

Barnard Castle often changed masters during the middle ages. Upon the forfeiture of the unfortunate John Baliol,

the first king of Scotland of that family, Edward I. seized this fortress among the other English estates of his refractory vassal. It was afterwards vested in the Beauchamps of Warwick, and in the Staffords of Buckingham, and was also sometimes in the possession of the Bishops of Durham, and sometimes in that of the crown. Richard III. is said to have enlarged and strengthened its fortifications, and to have made it for some time his principal residence, for the purpose of bridling and suppressing the Lancastrian faction in the northern counties. From the Staffords, Barnard Castle passed, probably by marriage, into the possession of the powerful Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland, and belonged to the last representative of that family when he engaged with the Earl of Northumberland in the ill-concerted insurrection of the twelfth of Queen Elizabeth. Upon this occasion, however, Sir George Bowes of Sheatlam, who held great possessions in the neighbourhood, anticipated the two insurgent earls, by seizing upon and garrisoning Barnard Castle, which he held out for ten days against all their forces, and then surrendered it upon honourable terms. See Sadler's State Papers, vol. II. p. 330. In a ballad, contained in Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. I. the siege is thus commemorated :—

Then Sir George Bowes he straight way rose,
After them some spoyle to make;
These noble erles turned back againe,
And aye they vowed that knight to take.

That baron he to his castle fled,
To Barnard Castle then fled hee;
The uttermost walles were eathe to won,
The erles have wonne them presentlie.

The uttermost walles were lime and bricke;
But thoughe they won them soon anone,
Long e'er they wan the innermost walles,
For they were cut in rock and stone.

By the suppression of this rebellion, and the consequent forfeiture of the Earl of Westmoreland, Barnard Castle reverted to the crown, and was sold or leased out to Car, Earl of Somerset, the guilty and unhappy favourite of James I. It was afterwards granted to Sir Henry Vane the Elder, and was therefore, in all probability, occupied for the parliament, whose interest during the civil war was so keenly espoused by the Vanes. It is now, with the other estates of that family, the property of the Right Honourable Earl of Darlington.

Note II.

———— no human ear,
Unsharpened by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank, &c.—St. V. p. 8.

I have had occasion to remark, in real life, the effect of keen and fervent anxiety in giving acuteness to the organs of sense. My gifted friend, Miss Joanna Baillie, whose dramatic works display such intimate acquaintance with the

operations of human passion, has not omitted this remarkable circumstance:

"*De Montfort.* (*Off his guard.*) 'Tis Rezenvelt: I heard his
well-known foot!
From the first stair-case mounting step by step.
Freb. How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound!
I heard him not.
[*De Montfort looks embarrassed, and is silent.*"

Note III.

The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff coat in ample fold
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.—St. VI. p. 9.

The use of complete suits of armour was fallen into disuse during the civil war, though they were still worn by leaders of rank and importance.—"In the reign of King James I." says our military antiquary, "no great alterations were made in the article of defensive armour, except that the buff-coat, or jerkin, which was originally worn under the cuirass, now became frequently a substitute for it, it having been found that a good buff leather would of itself resist the stroke of a sword; this, however, only occasionally took place among the light-armed cavalry and infantry, compleat suits of armour being still used among the heavy horse. Buff coats continued to be worn by the city trained-bands till within the memory of persons now living, so that defensive armour may in some measure be said to have terminated in the same materials

with which it began, that is, the skins of animals or leather."—Grose's *Military Antiquities, Lond.* 1801, 4. *vol. II. p.* 323.

Of these buff-coats, which were worn over the corslet, several are yet preserved, and Captain Grose has given an engraving of one which was used in the time of Charles I. by Sir Francis Rhodes, Bart. of Balbrough-Hall, Derbyshire. They were usually lined with silk or linen, secured before by buttons, or by a lace, and often richly decorated with gold or silver embroidery. From the following curious account of a dispute respecting a buff-coat between an old round-head captain and a justice of peace, by whom his arms were seized after the Restoration, we learn that the value and importance of this defensive garment were considerable. "A party of horse came to my house, commanded by Mr Peebles; and he told me he was come for my arms, and that I must deliver them. I asked him for his order. He told me he had a better order than Oliver used to give; and, clapping his hand upon his sword hilt, he said that was his order. I told him, if he had none but that, it was not sufficient to take my arms; and then he pulled out his warrant, and I read it. It was signed by Wentworth Armitage, a general warrant to search all persons they suspected, and so left the power to the soldiers at their pleasure. They came to us at Coalley-Hall, about sun-setting; and I caused a candle to be lighted, and conveyed Peebles into the room where my arms were; my arms were near the kitchen fire; and there they took away fowling-pieces, pistols, muskets, carbines, and such like, better than 20*l*. Then Mr Peebles asked me for

my buff-coat; and I told him they had no order to take away my apparel. He told me I was not to dispute their orders; but if I would not deliver it, he would carry me away prisoner, and had me out of doors. Yet he let me alone unto the next morning, that I must wait upon Sir John, at Halifax; and coming before him, he threatened me, and said, if I did not send the coat, for it was too good for me to keep. I told him it was not in his power to demand my apparel; and he, growing into a fit, called me rebel and traitor, and said if I did not send the coat with all speed, he would send me where I did not like well. I told him I was no rebel, and he did not well to call me so before these soldiers and gentlemen, to make me the mark for every one to shoot at. I departed the room, yet, notwithstanding all the threatenings, did not send the coat. But the next day he sent John Lyster, the son of Mr Thomas Lyster, of Shipden-Hall, for this coat, with a letter, verbatim thus: 'Mr Hodgson, I admire you will play the child so with me as you have done, in writing such an inconsiderate letter. Let me have the buff-coat sent forthwith, otherwise you shall so hear from me as will not very well please you.' I was not at home when this messenger came; but I had ordered my wife not to deliver it, but if they would take it, let them look to it: and he took it away; and one of Sir John's brethren wore it many years after. They sent Captain Batt to compound with my wife about it; but I sent word I would have my own again: but he advised me to take a price for it, and make no more ado. I said it was hard to take my

arms and apparel too; I had laid out a great deal of money for them; I hoped they did not mean to destroy me, by taking my goods illegally from me. He said he would make up the matter, if I pleased, betwixt us; and, it seems, had brought Sir John to a price for my coat. I would not have taken 10*l.* for it; he would have given about 4*l.*; but wanting my receipt for the money, he kept both sides, and I had never satisfaction."—*Memoirs of Captain Hodgson, Edin.* 1806, *p.* 178.

Note IV.

On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time, &c.—St. VIII. p. 12.

In this character I have attempted to sketch one of those West Indian adventurers, who, during the course of the seventeenth century, were popularly known by the name of Buccaneers. The successes of the English in the predatory incursions upon Spanish America, during the reign of Elizabeth, had never been forgotten; and from that period downward, the exploits of Drake and Raleigh were imitated upon a smaller scale indeed, but with equally desperate valour, by small bands of pirates, gathered from all nations, but chiefly French and English. The engrossing policy of the Spaniards tended greatly to increase the number of these free-booters, from whom their commerce and colonies suffered, in the issue, dreadful calamity. The Windward Islands, which the Spaniards did not deem worthy their own occupation, had

been gradually settled by adventurers of the French and English nations. But Frederic of Toledo, who was dispatched in 1630, with a powerful fleet against the Dutch, had orders from the court of Madrid to destroy these colonies, whose vicinity at once offended the pride, and excited the jealous suspicions of their Spanish neighbours. This order the Spanish admiral executed with sufficient rigour; but the only consequence was, that the planters, being rendered desperate by persecution, began, under the well-known name of Buccaneers, to commence a retaliation so horridly savage that the perusal makes the reader shudder. When they carried on their depredations at sea, they boarded, without respect to disparity of number, every Spanish vessel that came in their way; and, demeaning themselves both in the battle and after the conquest more like dæmons than human beings, they succeeded in impressing their enemies with a sort of superstitious terror, which rendered them incapable of offering effectual resistance. From piracy at sea they advanced to making predatory descents on the Spanish territories, in which they displayed the same furious and irresistible valour, the same thirst of spoil, and the same brutal inhumanity to their captives. The large treasures which they acquired in their adventures, they dissipated by the most unbounded licentiousness in gaming, women, wine, and debauchery of every species. When their spoils were thus wasted, they entered into some new association, and undertook new adventures. For further particulars concerning these extra-

ordinary banditti, the reader may consult Raynal, or the common and popular book called the History of the Buccaneers.

Note V.

——————— *On Marston heath*

Met, front to front, the ranks of death.—St. XII. p. 17.

The well-known and desperate battle of Long-Marston Moor, which terminated so unfortunately for the cause of Charles, commenced under very different auspices. Prince Rupert had marched with an army of 20,000 men for the relief of York, then besieged by Sir Thomas Fairfax, at the head of the parliamentary army, and the Earl of Leven, with the Scottish auxiliary forces. In this he so completely succeeded, that he compelled the besiegers to retreat to Marston Moor, a large open plain, about eight miles distant from the city. Thither they were followed by the prince, who had now united to his army the garrison of York, probably not less than ten thousand men strong, under the gallant Marquis (then Earl) of Newcastle. Whitelocke has recorded, with much impartiality, the following particulars of this eventful day:—" The right wing of the parliament was commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax, and consisted of all his horse, and three regiments of the Scots horse; the left wing was commanded by the Earl of Manchester and Colonel Cromwell. One body of their foot was commanded by Lord Fairfax, and consisted of his foot, and two brigades of the

Scots foot for a reserve; and the main body of the rest of the foot was commanded by General Leven.

"The right wing of the prince's army was commanded by the Earl of Newcastle, the left wing by the prince himself, and the main body by General Goring, Sir Charles Lucas, and Major-General Porter: thus were both sides drawn up into batalia.

"July 3d, 1644. In this posture both armies faced each other, and about seven o'clock in the morning the fight began between them. The prince, with his left wing, fell on the parliament's right wing, routed them, and pursued them a great way; the like did General Goring, Lucas, and Porter upon the parliament's main body. The three generals, giving all for lost, hasted out of the field, and many of their soldiers fled, and threw down their arms; the king's forces, too eagerly following them, the victory now almost atchieved by them, was again snatched out of their hands. For Colonel Cromwell, with the brave regiment of his countrymen, and Sir Thomas Fairfax having rallied some of his horse, fell upon the prince's right wing, where the Earl of Newcastle was, and routed them; and the rest of their companions rallying, they fell altogether upon the divided bodies of Rupert and Goring, and totally dispersed them, and obtained a compleat victory after three hours fight.

"From this battle and the pursuit some reckon were buryed 7000 Englishmen; all agree that above 3000 of the prince's men were slain in the battle, besides those in the

chace, and 3000 prisoners taken, many of their chief officers, 25 pieces of ordnance, 47 colours, 10,000 arms, two waggons of carabins and pistols, 130 barrels of powder, and all their bag and baggage."—WHITELOCKE's *Memoirs, Lond.* 1682, *fol. p.* 89.

Lord Clarendon informs us that the king, previous to receiving the real account of the battle, had been informed, by an express from Oxford, "that Prince Rupert had not only relieved York, but totally defeated the Scots, with many particulars to confirm it, all which was so much believed there, that they had made public fires of joy for the victory."

Note VI.

Monckton and Mitton told the news,
How troops of Roundheads choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward, past,
Cursing the day when zeal or meed
First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed.—St. XIX. p. 29.

Monckton and Mitton are villages near the river Ouse, and not very distant from the field of battle. The particulars of the action were violently disputed at the time; but the following extract, from the manuscript history of the Baronial House of Somerville, is decisive as to the flight of the Scottish general, the Earl of Leven. The particulars are given by the author of the history on the authority of his father, then the representative of the family. This curious

manuscript will be speedily published by consent of my noble friend, the present Lord Somerville.

"The order of this great battell, wherin both armies was neer of ane equall number, consisting, to the best calculatione, neer to three score thousand men upon both sydes, I shall not take upon me to discryve; albeit, from the draughts then taken upon the place, and information I receaved from this gentleman, who being then a volunteer, as having no command, had opportunitie and libertie to ryde from the one wing of the armie to the other, to view all ther severall squadrons of horse and battallions of foot how formed, and in what manner drawn up, with every other circumstance relateing to the fight, and that both as to the king's armies and that of the parliament's, amongst whom, untill the engadgment, he went from statione to statione to observe ther order and forme; but that the descriptione of this battell, with the various success on both sides at the beginning, with the losse of the royal army, and the sad effects that followed that misfortune as to his majesties interest, hes been so often done already by English authors, little to our comendatione, how justly I shall not dispute, seing the truth is, as our principall generall fled that night neer fourtie mylles from the place of the fight, that part of the armie where he commanded being totallie routed: but it is as true, that much of the victorie is attributed to the good conduct of David Lesselie, lievetennent-generall of our horse. Cromwell himself, that minione of fortune, but the

rod of God's wrath, to punish eftirward three rebellious nations, disdained not to take orders from him, albeit then in the same qualitie of command for the parliament, as being leivetennent-generall to the Earl of Manchester's horse, whom, with the assistance of the Scots horse, haveing routed the prince's right wing, as he had done that of the parliament's. These two commanders of the horse upon that wing, wisely restrained the great bodies of ther horse from persuing these brocken troups, but, wheelling to the left-hand, falls in upon the naked flanks of the prince's main battallion of foot, carying them doune with great violence; nether mett they with any great resistance untill they came to the Marques of Newcastle his battalione of White Coats, who, first peppering them soundly with ther shott, when they came to charge, stoutly boor them up with ther picks that they could not enter to break them. Here the parliament's horse of that wing receaved ther greatest losse, and a stop for sometyme putt to ther hoped-for victorie; and that only by the stout resistance of this gallant battallione, which consisted neer of four thousand foot, untill at length a Scots regiment of dragouns, commanded by Collonell Frizeall, with other two, was brought to open them upon some hand, which at length they did, when all the amunitione was spent. Having refused quarters, every man fell in the same order and ranke wherin he had foughten.

"Be this execution was done, the prince returned from the persuite of the right wing of the parliament's horse, which he had beatten and followed too farre, to the losse of

the battell, which certanely, in all men's opinions, he might have caryed if he had not been too violent upon the persuite; which gave his enemies upon the left-hand opportunitie to disperse and cut doune his infantrie, who, haveing cleared the field of all the standing bodies of foot, wer now, with many of ther oune, standing ready to receave the charge of his allmost spent horses if he should attempt it, which the prince observeing, and seeing all lost, he retreated to Yorke with two thousand horse. Notwithstanding of this, ther was that night such a consternatione in the parliament armies, that it's believed by most of those that wer there present, that if the prince, haveing so great a body of horse inteire, had made ane on fall that night, or the ensueing morning be tyme, he had caryed the victorie out of ther hands; for it's certane, by the morning's light, he had rallyed a body of ten thousand men, whereof ther was neer three thousand gallant horse. These, with the assistance of the toune and garrisone of Yorke, might have done much to have recovered the victory, for the losse of this battell in effect lost the king and his interest in the three kingdomes, his majestie never being able eftir this to make head in the north, but lost his garrisons every day.

"As for Generall Lesselie, in the beginning of this flight haveing that part of the army quite brocken, where he had placed himself, by the valour of the prince, he imagined, and was confermed by the opinione of others then upon the place with him, that the battell was irrecoverably lost, seeing they wer fleeing upon all hands; theirfore they humblie

intreated his excellence to reteir and wait his better fortune, which, without farder advyseing, he did; and never drew bridle untill he came the lenth of Leads, having ridden all that night with a cloak of *drap de berrie* about him, belonging to this gentleman of whom I write, then in his retinue, with many other officers of good qualitie. It was neer twelve the next day before they had the certanety who was master of the field, when at length ther arryves ane express, sent by David Lesselie, to acquaint the general they had obtained a most glorious victory, and that the prince, with his brocken troups, was fled from Yorke. This intelligence was somewhat amazeing to these gentlemen that had been eye witnesses to the disorder of the armie before ther retearing, and had then accompanyed the general in his flight, who, being much wearyed that evening of the battell with ordering of his armie, and now quite spent with his long journey in the night, had casten himselfe doune upon a bed to rest, when this gentleman comeing quyetly into his chamber, he awoke and hastily cryes out, 'Lievetennent-collonell, what newes?'—'All is safe, may it please your excellence, the parliament's armie hes obtained a great victory;' and then delyvers the letter. The generall upon the hearing of this, knocked upon his breast and sayes, 'I would to God I had dyed upon the place,' and then opens the letter, which, in a few lines, gave ane account of the victory, and in the close pressed his speedy returne to the armie, which he did the next day, being accompanyed some mylles back by this gentleman, who then takes his leave of him, and receaved

at parting many expressions of kyndenesse, with promises that he would never be unmyndful of his care and respect towards him; and in the end he intreats him to present his service to all his freinds and acquaintances in Scotland. Thereftir the generall sets forward in his journey for the armie, as this gentleman did for   , in order to his transportatione for Scotland, where he arryved sex dayes eftir the fight of Mestoune Muir, and gave the first true account and descriptione of that great battell, wherin the covenanters then gloryed soe much, that they impiously boasted the Lord had now signally appeared for his cause and people, it being ordinary for them, dureing the wholl time of this warre, to attribute the greatnes of their success to the goodnes and justice of ther cause, untill Divine Justice trysted them with some crosse dispensatione, and then you might have heard this language from them, 'That it pleases the Lord to give his oune the heavyest end of the tree to bear, that the saints and the people of God must still be sufferers while they are here away, that that malignant party was God's rod to punish them for ther unthankfulnesse, which in the end he will cast into the fire;' with a thousand other expressions and scripture citations, prophanely and blasphemously uttered by them, to palliate ther villainie and rebellion."—*MS. History of the Somerville Family.*

Note VII.

With his barbed horse, fresh tidings say
Stout Cromwell hath redeemed the day.—St. XIX. p. 30.

Cromwell, with his regiment of cuirassiers, had a principal share in turning the fate of the day at Marston Moor, which was equally matter of triumph to the independants, and of grief and heart-burning to the presbyterians and to the Scottish. Principal Baillie expresses his dissatisfaction as follows :—

"The independants sent up one quickly to assure that all the glory of that night was theirs ; that they and their Major-general Cromwell had done it all their alone : but Captain Stuart afterward shewed the vanity and falsehood of their disgraceful relation. God gave us that victory wonderfully. There were three generals on each side, Lesly, Fairfax, and Manchester ; Rupert, Newcastle, and King. Within half an hour and less, all six took them to their heels ; this to you alone. The disadvantage of the ground, and violence of the flower of Prince Rupert's horse, carried all our right-wing down ; only Eglinton kept ground, to his great loss ; his lieutenant-crowner, a brave man, I fear shall die, and his son Robert be mutilated of an arm. Lindsay had the greatest hazard of any ; but the beginning of the victory was from David Lesly, who before was much suspected of evil designs : he, with the Scots and Cromwell's horse, having the advantage of the ground, did dissipate all

before them."—Baillie's *Letters and Journals, Edin.* 1785, *8vo. II.* 36.

Note VIII.

Do not my native dales prolong
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Trained forward to his bloody fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous Hall?—St. XX. p. 31.

In a poem, entitled "The Lay of the Reedwater Minstrel," Newcastle, 1809, this tale, with many others peculiar to the valley of the Reed, is commemorated:—"The particulars of the traditional story of Parcy Reed of Troughend, and the Halls of Girsonsfield, the author had from a descendant of the family of Reed. From his account it appears that Percival Reed, Esquire, a keeper of Reedsdale, was betrayed by the Halls (hence denominated the false-hearted Ha's) to a band of moss-troopers of the name of Crosier, who slew him at Batinghope, near the source of the Reed.

"The Halls were, after the murder of Parcy Reed, held in such universal abhorrence and contempt by the inhabitants of Reedsdale for their cowardly and treacherous behaviour, that they were obliged to leave the country." In another passage we are informed that the ghost of the injured borderer is supposed to haunt the banks of a brook called the Pringle. These Redes of Troughend were a very ancient family, as may be conjectured from their deriving their

surname from the river on which they had their mansion. An epitaph on one of their tombs affirms, that the family held their lands of Troughend, which are situated on the Reed, nearly opposite to Otterburn, for the incredible space of nine hundred years.

Note IX.

And near the spot that gave me name,
The moated mound of Risingham,
Where Reed upon her margin sees
Sweet Woodburn's cottages and trees,
Some ancient sculptor's art has shewn
An outlaw's image on the stone.—St. XX. p. 31.

Risingham, upon the river Reed, near the beautiful hamlet of Woodburn, is an ancient Roman station, formerly called Habitançum. Camden says, that in his time the popular account bore that it had been the abode of a deity or giant, called Magon; and appeals, in support of this tradition, as well as to the etymology of Risingham, or Reisenham, which signifies, in German, the habitation of the giants, to two Roman altars taken out of the river, inscribed, DEO MOGONTI CADENORUM. About half a mile distant from Risingham, upon an eminence covered with scattered birch-trees and fragments of rock, there is cut upon a large rock, in *alto relievo*, a remarkable figure, called Robin of Risingham, or Robin of Reedsdale. It presents a hunter, with his bow raised in one hand, and in the other what seems to be

a hare. There is a quiver at the back of the figure, and he is dressed in a long coat, or kirtle, coming down to the knees, and meeting close, with a girdle bound round him. Dr Horsley, who saw all monuments of antiquity with Roman eyes, inclines to think this figure a Roman archer; and certainly the bow is rather of the ancient size than of that which was so formidable in the hand of the English archers of the middle ages. But the rudeness of the whole figure prevents our founding strongly upon mere inaccuracy of proportion. The popular tradition is, that it represents a giant, whose brother resided at Woodburn, and he himself at Risingham. It adds, that they subsisted by hunting, and that one of them, finding the game become too scarce to support them, poisoned his companion, in whose memory the monument was engraven. What strange and tragic circumstance may be concealed under this legend, or whether it is utterly apocryphal, it is now impossible to discover.

The name of Robin of Redesdale was given to one of the Umfravilles, Lords of Prudhow, and afterwards to one Hilliard, a friend and follower of the king-making Earl of Warwick. This person commanded an army of Northamptonshire and northern men, who seized on and beheaded the Earl Rivers, father to Edward the Fourth's queen, and his son, Sir John Woodville.—See HOLLINSHED, *ad annum*, 1469.

Note X.

——————— *Do thou revere*

The statutes of the buccaneer.—St. XXI. p. 33.

The "statutes of the buccaneers" were in reality more equitable than could have been expected from the state of society under which they had been formed. They chiefly related, as may readily be conjectured, to the distribution and the inheritance of their plunder.

When the expedition was completed, the fund of prize-money acquired was thrown together, each party taking his oath that he had retained or concealed no part of the common stock. If any one transgressed in this important particular, the punishment was his being set ashore on some desert key or island, to shift for himself as he could. The owners of the vessel had then their share assigned for the expences of the outfit. These were generally old pirates, settled at Tobago, Jamaica, St Domingo, or some other French and English settlement. The surgeon's and carpenter's salaries, with the price of provisions and ammunition, were also defrayed. Then followed the compensation due to the maimed and wounded, rated according to the damage they had sustained; as six hundred pieces of eight, or six slaves, for the loss of an arm or leg, and so in proportion.

"After this act of justice and humanity, the remainder of the booty was divided into as many shares as there were buccaneers. The commander could only lay claim to a single share as the rest; but they complimented him with two

or three, in proportion as he had acquitted himself to their satisfaction. When the vessel was not the property of the whole company, the person who had fitted it out and furnished it with necessary arms and ammunition, was entitled to a third of all the prizes. Favour had never any influence in the division of the booty; for every share was determined by lot. Instances of such rigid justice as this are not easily met with, and they extended even to the dead. Their share was given to the man who was known to be their companion when alive, and therefore their heir. If the person who had been killed had no intimate, his part was sent to his relations, when they were known. If there were no friends nor relations, it was distributed in charity to the poor and to churches, which were to pray for the person in whose name these benefactions were given, the fruits of inhuman, but necessary piratical plunders."—RAYMOND's *History of European Settlements in the East and West Indies, by Justamond, Lond.* 1776, 8*vo*. *III. p*. 41.

NOTES TO CANTO SECOND.

Note I.

——— *the course of Tees.*—St. II. p. 56.

The view from Barnard Castle commands the rich and magnificent valley of Tees. Immediately adjacent to the river, the banks are very thickly wooded; at a little distance they are more open and cultivated; but being interspersed with hedge-rows, and with isolated trees of great size and age, they still retain the richness of woodland scenery. The river itself flows in a deep trench of solid rock, chiefly limestone and marble. The finest view of its romantic course is from a handsome modern bridge built over the Tees, by the late Mr Morritt of Rokeby. In Leland's time the marble quarries seem to have been of some value. "Hard under the cliff by Egleston, is found on eche side of Tese very fair marble, wont to be taken up booth by marbelers of Barnardes Castelle and of Egleston, and partly to have been wrought by them, and partly sold onwrought to others."—*Itinerary, Oxford,* 1768, *8vo. p.* 88.

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Note II.

Eglistone's grey ruins.—St. IV. p. 60.

The ruins of this abbey or priory, for Tanner calls it the former, and Leland the latter, are beautifully situated upon the angle, formed by a little dell called Thorsgill, at its junction with the Tees. A good part of the religious house is still in some degree habitable, but the church is in ruins. Eglistone was dedicated to St Mary and St John the Baptist, and is supposed to have been founded by Ralph de Multon about the end of Henry the Second's reign. There were formerly the tombs of the families of Rokebys, Bowes, and Fitzhughs.

Note III.

———————— *the mound*
Raised by that Legion long renowned,
Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
Of pious, faithful, conquering fame.—St. V. p. 61.

Close behind the George Inn at Greta-Bridge there is a well-preserved Roman encampment, surrounded with a triple ditch, lying between the river Greta and a brook called the Tutta. The four entrances are easily to be discerned. Very many Roman altars and monuments have been found in the vicinity, most of which are preserved at Rokeby by my friend Mr Morritt. Among others is a small votive altar, with the inscription LEG. VI. VIC. P. F. F. which has been rendered *Legio. Sexta. Victrix. Pia. Fortis. Fidelis.*

Note IV.

——————— *Rokeby's turrets high.*—St. VI. p. 62.

This ancient manor long gave name to a family by whom it is said to have been possessed from the Conquest downward, and who are at different times distinguished in history. It was the Baron of Rokeby who finally defeated the insurrection of the Earl of Northumberland, *tempore Hen. IV.*, of which Hollinshed gives the following account:—

"The king advertised hereof, caused a great armie to be assembled, and came forward with the same towards his enemies; but yer the king came to Notingham, Sir Thomas or (as other copies haue) Sir Rafe Rokesbie, shiriff of Yorkeshire, assembled the forces of the countrie to resist the earle and his power; comming to Grimbautbrigs, beside Knaresborough, there to stop them the passage; but they returning aside, got to Weatherbie, and so to Tadcaster, and finally came forward unto Bramham More, near to Haizelwood, where they chose their ground meet to fight upon. The shiriffe was as readie to giue battell as the erle to receiue it; and so with a standard of S. George spread, set fiercelie vpon the earle, who, vnder a standard of his owne armes, encountered his aduersaries with great manhood. There was a sore incounter and cruell conflict betwixt the parties, but in the end the victorie fell to the shiriffe. The Lord Bardolfe was taken, but sore wounded, so that he shortlie after died of the hurts. As for the Earle of Northumberland, he was slaine outright; so that now the prophecy was fulfilled,

which gaue an inkling of this his heauy hap long before namelie,

Stirps Persitina periet confusa ruina.

For this earle was the stocke and maine root of all that were left aliue, called by the name of Persie; and of manie more by diuers slaughters dispatched. For whose misfortune the people were not a little sorrie, making report of the gentleman's valiantnesse, renowne, and honour, and applieing vnto him certeine lamentable verses out of Lucaine, saieng,

Sed nos nec sanguis, nec tantum vulnera nostri
Affecere senis; quantum gestata per urbem
Ora ducis, quæ transfixo deformia pilo
Vidimus.

For his head, full of siluer horie haires, being put upon a stake, was openlie carried through London, and set vpon the bridge of the same citie: in like maner was the Lord Bardolfes."—Holinshed's *Chronicles, Lond.* 1808, *4to. III.* 45.

The Rokeby, or Rokesby, family continued to be distinguished until the great civil war, when, having embraced the cause of Charles I., they suffered severely by fines and confiscations. The estate then passed from its ancient possessors to the family of the Robinsons, from whom it was purchased by the father of my valued friend, the present proprietor.

Note V.

A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
As e'er the foot of Minstrel trode!—St. VII. p. 63.

What follows is an attempt to describe the romantic glen, or rather ravine, through which the Greta finds a passage between Rokeby and Mortham, the former situated upon the left bank of Greta, the latter on the right bank, about half a mile nearer to its junction with the Tees. The river runs with very great rapidity over a bed of solid rock, broken by many shelving descents, down which the stream dashes with great noise and impetuosity, vindicating its etymology, which has been derived from the Gothic, GRIDAN, to clamour. The banks partake of the same wild and romantic character, being chiefly lofty cliffs of limestone rock, whose grey colour contrasts admirably with the various trees and shrubs which find root among their crevices, as well as with the hue of the ivy, which clings around them in profusion, and hangs down from their projections in long sweeping tendrils. At other points the rocks give place to precipitous banks of earth, bearing large trees, intermixed with copse-wood. In one spot the dell, which is elsewhere very narrow, widens for a space to leave room for a dark grove of yew-trees, intermixed here and there with aged pines of uncommon size. Directly opposite to this sombre thicket, the cliffs on the other side of the Greta are tall, white, and fringed with all kinds of deciduous shrubs. The whole scenery of this spot is so much adapted to the ideas of superstition, that it has

acquired the name of Blockula, from the place where the Swedish witches were supposed to hold their sabbath. The dell, however, has superstitions of its own growth, for it is supposed to be haunted by a female spectre, called the Dobie of Mortham. The cause assigned for her appearance is a lady's having been whilom murdered in the wood, in evidence of which her blood is shewn upon the stairs of the old tower at Mortham. But whether she was slain by a jealous husband or by savage banditti, or by an uncle who coveted her estate, or by a rejected lover, are points upon which the traditions of Rokeby do not enable us to decide.

Note VI.

What gales are sold on Lapland's shore.—St. XI. p. 70.

" Also I shall shew very briefly what force conjurers and witches have in constraining the elements enchanted by them or others, that they may exceed or fall short of their natural order: premising this, that the extream land of North Finland and Lapland was so taught witchcraft formerly in heathenish times, as if they had learned this cursed art from Zoroastres the Persian; though other inhabitants by the seacoasts are reported to be bewitched with the same madness: for they exercise this divelish art, of all the arts of the world, to admiration; and in this, or other such like mischief, they commonly agree. The Finlanders were wont formerly, amongst their other errors of gentilisme, to sell winds to merchants that were stopt on their coasts by contrary weather; and when they had their price, they knit three magi-

cal knots, not, like to the laws of Cassius, bound up with a thong, and they gave them vnto the merchants; observing that rule, that when they unloosed the first they should have a good gale of wind, when the second a stronger wind, but when they untied the third they should have such cruel tempests that they should not be able to look out of the forecastle to avoid the rocks, nor move a foot to pull down the sails, nor stand at the helm to govern the ship; and they made an unhappy trial of the truth of it who denied that there was any such power in those knots."—Olaus Magnus's *History of the Goths, Swedes, and Vandals, Lond.* 1658, *fol. p.* 47.

Note VII.

How whistle rash bids tempests roar.—St. XI. p. 70.

That this is a general superstition is well known to all who have been on ship-board, or who have conversed with seamen. The most formidable whistler that I remember to have met with was the apparition of a certain Mrs Leakey, who about 1636 resided, we are told, at Mynehead, in Somerset, where her only son drove a considerable trade between that port and Waterford, and was owner of several vessels. This old gentlewoman was of a social disposition, and so acceptable to her friends, that they used to say to her and to each other, it were pity such an excellent good-natured old lady should die; to which she was wont to reply, that whatever pleasure they might find in her company just now, they would not greatly like to see or converse with her after death,

which nevertheless she was apt to think might happen. Accordingly, after her death and funeral, she began to appear to various persons by night and by noonday, in her own house, in the town and fields, at sea and upon shore. So far had she departed from her former urbanity, that she is recorded to have kicked a doctor of medicine for his impolite negligence in omitting to hand her over a stile. It was also her humour to appear upon the quay, and call for a boat. But especially so soon as any of her son's ships approached the harbour, "this ghost would appear in the same garb and likeness as when she was alive, and, standing at the mainmast, would blow with a whistle, and though it were never so great a calm, yet immediately there would arise a most dreadful storm, that would break, wreck, and drown ship and goods." When she had thus proceeded until her son had neither credit to freight a vessel, nor could have procured men to sail it, she began to attack the persons of his family, and actually strangled their only child in the cradle. The rest of the story, showing how the spectre looked over the shoulder of her daughter-in-law while dressing her hair at a looking-glass; and how Mrs Leakey the younger took courage to address her; and how the beldam dispatched her to an Irish prelate, famous for his crimes and misfortunes, to exhort him to repentance, and to apprize him that otherwise he would be hanged; and how the bishop was satisfied with replying, that if he was born to be hanged, he should not be drowned;—all these, with many more particulars, may be found at the end of one of John Dunton's publications, called Athenianism,

London, 1710, where the tale is engrossed under the title of The Apparition Evidence.

Note VIII.

Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light.—St. XI. p. 70.

"This Ericus, King of Sweden, in his time was held second to none in the magical art; and he was so familiar with the evil spirits, which he exceedingly adored, that which way soever he turned his cap, the wind would presently blow that way. From this occasion he was called Windy Cap; and many men believed that Regnerus, King of Denmark, by the conduct of this Ericus, who was his nephew, did happily extend his piracy into the most remote parts of the earth, and conquered many countries and fenced cities by his cunning, and at last was his coadjutor; that by the consent of the nobles, he should be chosen King of Sweden, which continued a long time with him very happily, until he died of old age."—Olaus, *ut supra, p.* 45.

Note IX.

———— *The Dæmon-frigate.*—St. XI. p. 71.

This is an allusion to a well-known nautical superstition concerning a fantastic vessel, called by sailors The Flying Dutchman, and supposed to be seen about the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope. She is distinguished from earthly vessels by bearing a press of sail when all others are unable, from stress of weather, to shew an inch of canvass. The cause of her wandering is not altogether certain; but the

general account is, that she was originally a vessel loaded with great wealth, on board of which some horrid act of murder and piracy had been committed; that the plague broke out among the wicked crew who had perpetrated the crime, and that they sailed in vain from port to port, offering, as the price of shelter, the whole of their ill-gotten wealth; that they were excluded from every harbour, for fear of the contagion which was devouring them, and that, as a punishment of their crimes, the apparition of the ship still continues to haunt those seas in which the catastrophe took place, and is considered by the mariners as the worst of all possible omens.

My late lamented friend, Dr John Leyden, has introduced this phenomenon into his Scenes of Infancy, imputing, with poetical ingenuity, the dreadful judgment to the first ship which commenced the slave trade:—

Stout was the ship from Benin's palmy shore,
That first the freight of bartered captives bore;
Bedimmed with blood, the sun with shrinking beams
Beheld her bounding o'er the ocean streams;
But, ere the moon her silver horns had reared,
Amid the crew the speckled plague appeared.
Faint and despairing on their watery bier,
To every friendly shore the sailors steer;
Repelled from port to port, they sue in vain,
And track with slow unsteady sail the main.
Where ne'er the bright and buoyant wave is seen
To streak with wandering foam the sea-weeds green,
Towers the tall mast a lone and leafless tree,
Till self-impelled amid the waveless sea;

Where summer breezes ne'er were heard to sing,
Nor hovering snow-birds spread the downy wing,
Fixed as a rock amid the boundless plain,
The yellow stream pollutes the stagnant main,
Till far through night the funeral flames aspire,
As the red lightning smites the ghastly pyre.
Still doomed by fate on weltering billows rolled,
Along the deep their restless course to hold,
Scenting the storm, the shadowy sailors guide
The prow with sails opposed to wind and tide;
The spectre ship, in livid glimpsing light,
Glares baleful on the shuddering watch at night,
Unblest of God and man!—Till time shall end,
Its view strange horror to the storm shall lend.

Note X.

——— *by some desart isle or key.*—St. XII. p. 71.

What contributed much to the security of the buccaneers, about the Windward Islands, was the great number of little islets, called in that country *keys*. These are small sandy patches, appearing just above the surface of the ocean, covered only with a few bushes and weeds, but sometimes affording springs of water, and in general much frequented by turtle. Such little uninhabited spots afforded the pirates good harbours, either for refitting or for the purpose of ambush; they were occasionally the hiding-place of their treasure, and often afforded a shelter to themselves. As many of the atrocities which they practised on their prisoners were committed in such spots, there are some of these keys which even now have an indifferent reputation among seamen, and

where they are with difficulty prevailed on to remain ashore at night, on account of the visionary terrors incident to places which have been thus contaminated.

Note XI.

Before the gate of Mortham stood.—St. XVI. p. 77.

The castle of Mortham, which Leland terms " Mr Rokesby's place, in *ripa citer*, scant a quarter of mile from Greta-bridge, and not a quarter of mile beneath into Tees," is a picturesque tower, surrounded by buildings of different ages, now converted into a farm-house and offices. The battlements of the tower itself are singularly elegant, the architect having broken them at regular intervals into different heights; while those at the corners of the tower project into octangular turrets. They are also from space to space covered with stones laid across them, as in modern embrasures, the whole forming an uncommon and beautiful effect. The surrounding buildings are of a less happy form, being pointed into high and steep roofs. A wall, with embrasures, incloses the southern front, where a low portal arch affords an entry to what was the castle court. At some distance is most happily placed, between the stems of two magnificent elms, the monument alluded to in the text. It is said to have been brought from the ruins of Eglistone Priory, and, from the armoury with which it is richly carved, appears to have been a tomb of the Fitz-Hughs.

The situation of Mortham is eminently beautiful, occupying a high bank, at the bottom of which the Greta winds

out of the dark, narrow, and romantic dell, which the text has attempted to describe, and flows onward through a more open valley to meet the Tees, about a quarter of a mile from the castle. Mortham is surrounded by old trees, happily and widely grouped with Mr Morritt's new plantations.

Note XII.

There dig and tomb your precious heap,
And bid the dead your treasure keep.—St. XVIII. p. 81.

If time did not permit the buccaneers to lavish away their plunder in their usual debaucheries, they were wont to hide it, with many superstitious solemnities, in the desert islands and keys which they frequented, and where much treasure, whose lawless owners perished without reclaiming it, is still supposed to be concealed. The most cruel of mankind are often the most superstitious, and these pirates are said to have had recourse to a horrid ritual in order to secure an unearthly guardian to their treasures. They killed a Negro or Spaniard, and buried him with the treasure, believing that his spirit would haunt the spot, and terrify away all intruders. I cannot produce any other authority on which this custom is ascribed to them than that of maritime tradition, which is, however, amply sufficient for the purposes of poetry.

Note XIII.

The power ————————
That unsubdued and lurking lies
To take the felon by surprise.—St. XIX. p. 82.

All who are conversant with the administration of criminal justice, must remember many occasions in which malefactors appear to have conducted themselves with a species of infatuation, either by making unnecessary confidences respecting their guilt, or by sudden and involuntary allusions to circumstances by which it could not fail to be exposed. A remarkable instance occurred in the celebrated case of Eugene Aram. A skeleton being found near Knaresborough, was supposed, by the persons who gathered around the spot, to be the remains of one Clarke, who had disappeared some years before, under circumstances leading to a suspicion of his having been murdered. One Houseman, who had mingled in the crowd, suddenly said, while looking at the skeleton, and hearing the opinion which was buzzed around, "That is no more Dan Clarke's bone than it is mine!"—a sentiment expressed so positively, and with such peculiarity of manner, as to lead all who heard him to infer that he must necessarily know where the real body had been discovered. Accordingly, being apprehended, he confessed having assisted Eugene Aram to murder Clarke, and to hide his body in Saint Robert's Cave. It happened to the author himself, while conversing with a person accused of an atrocious crime, for the purpose of rendering him professional

assistance upon his trial, to hear the prisoner, after the most solemn and reiterated protestations that he was guiltless, suddenly, and, as it were, involuntarily, in the course of his communications, make such an admission as was altogether incompatible with innocence.

Note XIV.

—— *Brackenbury's dismal tower.*—St. XXVIII. p. 94.

This tower has been already mentioned: it is situated near the north-eastern extremity of the wall which incloses Bernard-Castle, and is traditionally said to have been the prison. By an odd coincidence it bears a name which we naturally connect with imprisonment, from its being that of Sir Robert Brackenbury, lieutenant of the Tower of London under Edward IV. and Richard III.

Note XV.

Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
Must fine for freedom and estate.

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Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee!—St. XXXI. p. 97.

After the battle of Marston Moor, the Earl of Newcastle retired beyond sea in disgust, and many of his followers laid down their arms, and made the best composition they could with the committees of parliament. Fines were imposed upon them in proportion to their estates and degrees of delinquency, and these fines were often bestowed upon such

persons as had deserved well of the commons. In some circumstances it happened that the oppressed cavaliers were fain to form family alliances with some powerful person among the triumphant party. The whole of Sir Robert Howard's excellent comedy of the Committee turns upon the plot of Mr and Mrs Day, to enrich their family by compelling Arabella, whose estate was under sequestration, to marry their son Abel, as the price by which she was to compound with parliament for delinquency; that is, for attachment to the royal cause.

NOTES TO CANTO THIRD.

Note I.

The Indian, prowling for his prey,
Who hears the settlers track his way.—St. II. p. 102.

The patience, abstinence, and ingenuity exerted by the North American Indians, when in pursuit of plunder or vengeance, is the most distinguished feature in their character; and the activity and address which they display in their retreat is equally surprising. Adair, whose absurd hypothesis and turgid style do not affect the general authenticity of his anecdotes, has recorded an instance which seems incredible.

"When the Chickasah nation was engaged in a former war with the Muskohge, one of their young warriors set off against them to revenge the blood of a near relation. - - - - He went through the most unfrequented and thick parts of the woods as such a dangerous enterprise required, till he arrived opposite to the great and old-beloved town of refuge, Koosah, which stands high on the eastern side of a bold river,

about 250 yards broad, that runs by the late dangerous Alebahma-Fort, down to the black poisoning Mobille, and so into the gulph of Mexico. There he concealed himself under cover of the top of a fallen pine-tree, in view of the ford of the old trading path, where the enemy now and then pass the river in their light poplar canoes. All his war store of provisions consisted in three stands of barbicued venison, till he had an opportunity to revenge blood, and return home. He waited with watchfulness and patience almost three days, when a young man, a woman, and a girl, passed a little wide of him about an hour before sunset. The former he shot down, tomohawked the other two, and scalped each of them in a trice, in full view of the town. By way of bravado, he shaked the scalps before them, sounded the awful death whoop, and set off along the trading path, trusting to his heels, while a great many of the enemy ran to their arms, and gave chace. Seven miles from thence he entered the great blue ridge of the Apalahche mountains. About an hour before day he had run over seventy miles of that mountainous tract; then, after sleeping two hours in a sitting posture, leaning his back against a tree, he set off again with fresh speed. As he threw away the venison when he found himself pursued by the enemy, he was obliged to support nature with such herbs, roots, and nuts as his sharp eyes, with a running glance, directed him to snatch up in his course. Though I often have rode that war-path alone, when delay might have proved dangerous, and with as fine and strong horses as any in America, it took me five days to ride from the aforesaid

Koosah to this sprightly warrior's place in the Chickasah country, the distance of 300 computed miles; yet he ran it, and got home safe and well at about eleven o'clock of the third day, which was only one day and a half and two nights."—Adair's *History of the American Indians, Lond.* 1775, 4*to. p.* 395.

Note II.

In Redesdale his youth had heard
Each art her wily dalesmen dared.—St. II. p. 103.

"What manner of cattle-stealers they are that inhabit these valleys in the marches of both kingdoms, John Lesley, a Scotchman himself, and Bishop of Ross, will inform you. They sally out of their own borders in the night, in troops, through unfrequented by-ways and many intricate windings. All the day-time they refresh themselves and their horses in lurking holes they had pitched upon before, till they arrive in the dark in those places they have a design upon. As soon as they have seized upon the booty, they in like manner return home in the night, through blind ways, and fetching many a compass. The more skilful any captain is to pass through those wild deserts, crooked turnings, and deep precipices in the thickest mists, his reputation is the greater, and he is looked upon as a man of an excellent head. And they are so very cunning that they seldom have their booty taken from them, unless sometimes when, by the help of blood-hounds following them exactly upon the track, they may chance to fall into the hands of their adversaries. When

being taken, they have so much persuasive eloquence, and so many smooth insinuating words at command, that if they do not move their judges, nay, and even their adversaries, (notwithstanding the severity of their natures,) to have mercy, yet they incite them to admiration and compassion."—CAMDEN'S *Britannia*.

The inhabitants of the valleys of Tyne and Reed were, in ancient times, so inordinately addicted to these depredations, that in 1564 the Incorporated Merchant-adventurers of Newcastle made a law that none born in these districts should be admitted apprentice. The inhabitants are stated to be so generally addicted to rapine, that no faith should be reposed in those proceeding from "such lewde and wicked progenitors." This regulation continued to stand unrepealed until 1771. A beggar, in an old play, describes himself as "born in Redesdale, in Northumberland, and come of a wight-riding surname, called the Robsons, good honest men and true, *saving a little shifting for their living, God help them*;"—a description which would have applied to most borderers on both sides.

Reidswair, famed for a skirmish to which it gives name, is on the very edge of the Carter-Fell, which divides England from Scotland. The Rooken is a place upon Reedwater. Bertram, being described as a native of these dales, where the habits of hostile depredation long survived the union of the crowns, may have been, in some degree, prepared by education for the exercise of a similar trade in the wars of the buccaneers.

Note III.

Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
The sparkle of his swarthy eye.—St. IV. p. 106.

After one of the recent battles, in which the Irish rebels were defeated, one of their most active leaders was found in a bog, in which he was immersed up to the shoulders, while his head was concealed by an impending ledge of turf. Being detected and seized notwithstanding his precaution, he became solicitous to know how his retreat had been discovered. " I caught," answered the Sutherland Highlander, by whom he was taken, " the sparkle of your eye." Those who are accustomed to mark hares upon their form, usually discover them by the same circumstance.

Note IV.

And throatwort with its azure bell.—St. VIII. p. 112.

The Campanula latifolia, *Grand Throatwort*, or *Canterbury bells*, grows in profusion upon the beautiful banks of the river Greta, where it divides the manors of Brignal and Scargill, about three miles above Greta-Bridge.

Note V.

Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
His soul's redemption for revenge!—St. IX. p. 115.

It is agreed by all the writers upon magic and witchcraft, that revenge was the most common motive for the pretended compact between Satan and his vassals. The ingenuity

of Reginald Scot has very happily stated how such an opinion came to root itself, not only in the mind of the public and of the judges, but even in that of the poor wretches themselves who were accused of sorcery, and were often firm believers in their own power and their own guilt.

"One sort of such as are said to be witches, are women which be commonly old, lame, blear-eyed, pale, foul, and full of wrinkles; poor, sullen, superstitious, or papists, or such as know no religion; in whose drowsie minds the devil hath gotten a fine seat; so as what mischief, mischance, calamity, or slaughter is brought to pass, they are easily perswaded the same is done by themselves, imprinting in their minds an earnest and constant imagination thereof. ---- These go from house to house, and from door to door, for a pot of milk, yest, drink, pottage, or some such relief, without the which they could hardly live; neither obtaining for their service or pains, nor yet by their art, nor yet at the devil's hands, (with whom they are said to make a perfect and visible bargain,) either beauty, money, promotion, wealth, pleasure, honour, knowledge, learning, or any other benefit whatsoever.

"It falleth out many time, that neither their necessities nor their expectation is answered or served in those places where they beg or borrow, but rather their lewdness is by their neighbours reproved. And farther, in tract of time the witch waxeth odious and tedious to her neighbours, and they again are despised and despited of her; so as sometimes she curseth one, and sometimes another, and that

from the master of the house, his wife, children, cattel, &c. to the little pig that lieth in the stie. Thus, in process of time, they have all displeased her, and she hath wished evil luck unto them all; perhaps with curses and imprecations made in form. Doubtless (at length) some of her neighbours die or fall sick, or some of their children are visited with diseases that vex them strangely, as apoplexies, epilepsies, convulsions, hot fevers, worms, &c. which, by ignorant parents, are supposed to be the vengeance of witches. - - - -

"The witch, on the other side, expecting her neighbours mischances, and seeing things sometimes come to pass according to her wishes, curses, and incantations, (for Bodin himself confesses, that not above two in a hundred of their witchings or wishings take effect,) being called before a justice, by due examination of the circumstances, is driven to see her imprecations and desires, and her neighbours harms and losses to concur, and, as it were, to take effect; and so confesseth that she (as a goddess) hath brought such things to pass. Wherein not only she, but the accuser, and also the justice, are foully deceived and abused, as being, through her confession, and other circumstances, perswaded (to the injury of God's glory) that she hath done, or can do, that which is proper only to God himself."—Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft, Lond.* 1655, *fol. p.* 4, 5.

Note VI.*

Of my marauding on the clowns
Of Calverley and Bradford downs.—St. XI. p. 118.

The troops of the king, when they first took the field, were as well disciplined as could be expected from circumstances. But as the circumstances of Charles became less favourable, and his funds for regularly paying his forces decreased, habits of military license prevailed among them in greater excess. Lacy the player, who served his master during the civil war, brought out, after the Restoration, a piece called the Old Troop, in which he seems to have commemorated some real incidents which occurred in his military career. The names of the officers of the Troop sufficiently express their habits. We have Flea-flint Plunder-Master-General, Captain Ferret-farm, and Quarter-Master Burn-dorp. The officers of the Troop are in league with these worthies, and connive at their plundering the country for a suitable share in the plunder. All this was undoubtedly drawn from the life which Lacy had an opportunity to study. The moral of the whole is comprehended in a rebuke given to the lieutenant, whose disorders in the country are said to prejudice the king's cause more than his courage in the field could recompence. The piece is by no means void of farcical humour.

Note VII.

—— Brignal's woods, and Scargill's, wave
E'en now o'er many a sister cave.—St. XIV. p. 122.

The banks of the Greta, below Rutherford-bridge, abounds in seams of a greyish slate, which are wrought in some places to a very great depth under ground, thus forming artificial caverns, which, when the seam has been exhausted, are gradually hidden by the underwood which grows in profusion upon the romantic banks of the river. In times of public confusion, they might be well adapted to the purposes of banditti.

Note VIII.

When Spain waged warfare with our land.—St. XX. p. 132.

There was a short war with Spain in 1625-6, which will be found to agree pretty well with the chronology of the poem. But probably Bertram held an opinion very common among the maritime heroes of the age, that "there was no peace beyond the Line." The Spanish *guarda costas* were constantly employed in aggressions upon the trade and settlements of the English and French, and by their own severities gave room for the system of buccaneering, at first adapted in self-defence and retaliation, and afterwards persevered in from habit and a thirst of plunder.

Note IX.

——— *our comrades' strife.*—St. XXIII. p. 136.

The laws of the buccaneers, and their successors the pirates, however severe and equitable, were, like other laws, often set aside by the stronger party. Their quarrels about the division of the spoil fill their history, and they as frequently arose out of mere frolic, or the tyrannical humour of their chiefs. An anecdote of Teach (called Blackbeard) shews that their habitual indifference for human life extended to their companions as well as their enemies and captives.

"One night drinking in his cabin with Hands, the pilot, and another man, Blackbeard, without any provocation, privately draws out a small pair of pistols, and cocks them under the table, which being perceived by the man, he withdrew upon deck, leaving Hands, the pilot, and the captain together. When the pistols were ready, he blew out the candles, and, crossing his hands, discharged them at his company; Hands the master was shot through the knee, and lamed for life; the other pistol did no execution."—Johnson's *History of Pirates, Lond.* 1724, *8vo. vol. I. p.* 88.

Another anecdote of this worthy may be also mentioned. "The hero of whom we are writing was thoroughly accomplished this way, and some of his frolicks of wickedness were so extravagant, as if he aimed at making his men believe he was a devil incarnate; for being one day at sea, and a little flushed with drink, 'Come,' says he, 'let us make a hell of

our own, and try how long we can bear it;' accordingly he, with two or three others, went down into the hold, and, closing up all the hatches, filled several pots full of brimstone and other combustible matter, and set it on fire, and so continued till they were almost suffocated, when some of the men cried out for air; at length he opened the hatches, not a little pleased that he held out the longest."—*Ibid. p.* 90.

Note X.

——————— *my rangers go*
Even now to track a milk-white doe.—St. XXV. p. 139.

"Immediately after supper, the huntsman should go to his master's chamber, and if he serve a king, then let him go to the master of the game's chamber, to know in what quarter he determineth to hunt the day following, that he may know his own quarter; that done, he may go to bed, to the end that he may rise the earlier in the morning, according to the time and season, and according to the place where he must hunt: then, when he is up and ready, let him drinke a good draught, and fetch his hound, to make him breake his fast a little: and let him not forget to fill his bottel with good wine; that done, let him take a little vinegar into the palme of his hand, and put it in the nostrils of his hound, for to make him snuffe, to the end his sent may be the perfecter, then let him go to the wood. - - - - When the huntsman perceiveth that it is time to begin to beat, let him put his hound before him, and beat the outsides of springs

or thickets; and if he find an hart or deer that likes him, let him mark well whether it be fresh or not, which he may know as wel by the maner of his hounds drawing as also by the eye. - - - - When he hath well considered what maner of hart it may be, and hath marked every thing to judge by, then let him draw till he come to the couert where he is gone to; and let him harbour him if he can, still marking all his tokens, as well by the slot as by the entries, foyles, or suchlike. That done, let him plash or bruse down small twigges, some aloft and some below, as the art requireth, and therewithall, whilest his hound is hote, let him beat the outsides, and make his ring walkes twice or thrice about the wood."—*The Noble Art of Venerie, or Hunting, Lond.* 1611, *4to. p.* 76, 77.

Note XI.

He turned his charger as he spake, &c.—St. XXVIII. p. 144.

The last verse of this song is taken from the fragment of an old Scottish ballad of which I have only heard the following verses, relating perhaps to some of the followers of James II. who joined him in Ireland previous to the battle of the Boyne:—

It was all for my rightful king
I left my native strand,
It was all for my rightful king
I e'er saw Irish land.

* * *

The trooper turn'd him round about
Upon the Irish shore,
He gave his bridle reins a shake,
Said " Adieu for evermore,
My love !
And adieu for evermore."

Note XII.

The Baron of Ravensworth.—St. XXX. p. 146.

The ruins of Ravensworth Castle stand in the North Riding of Yorkshire, about three miles from the town of Richmond, and adjoining to the waste called the Forest of Arkingarth. It belonged originally to the powerful family of Fitzhugh, from whom it passed to the Lords Dacre of the South.

Note XIII.

——————— *Rere-cross on Stanemore.*—St. XXX. p. 147.

This is a fragment of an old cross with its pediment, surrounded by an entrenchment, upon the very summit of the waste ridge of Stanmore, near a small house of entertainment called the Spittal. It is called Rere-cross, or Ree-cross, of which Hollinshed gives us the following explanation :—

" At length a peace was concluded betwixt the two kings vnder these conditions, that Malcolme should enjoy that part of Northumberland which lieth betwixt Tweed, Cumberland, and Stainmore, and doo homage to the Kinge of England for the same. In the midst of Stainmore there

shall be a crosse set up, with the Kinge of England's image on the one side, and the Kinge of Scotland's on the other, to signifie that one is march to England, and the other to Scotland. This crosse was called the Roi-crosse, that is, the cross of the kinge."—HOLINSHED, *Lond.* 1808, 4*to. v.* 280.

Hollinshed's sole authority seems to have been Boethius. But it is not improbable that his account may be the true one, although the circumstance does not occur in Wintoun's Chronicle. The situation of the cross, and the pains taken to defend it, seem to indicate that it was intended for a land-mark of importance.

Note XIV.

——— *Hast thou lodged our deer?*—St. XXXI. p. 148.

The duty of the ranger, or pricker, was first to lodge, or harbour, the deer; *i. e.* to discover his retreat, as described at length in Note X., and then to make his report to his prince, or master:—

Before the king I come report to make,
Then husht and peace for noble Tristrame's sake - - -
My liege, I went this morning on my quest,
My hound did sticke, and seem'd to vent some beast.
I held him short, and drawing after him,
I might behold the hart was feeding trym;
His head was high, and large in each degree,
Well paulmed eke, and seem'd full sound to be.
Of colour browne, he beareth eight and tenne,
Of stately height and long he seemed then.

His beam seem'd great, in good proportion led,
Well barred and round, well pearled neare his head.
He seemed fayre tweene blacke and berrie brounde,
He seemes well fed by all the signes I found.
For when I had well marked him with eye,
I stept aside, to watch where he would lye.
And when I so had wayted full an houre,
That he might be at layre and in his boure,
I cast about to harbour him full sure;
My hound by sent did me thereof assure - - - -
Then if he ask what slot or view I found,
I say the slot or view was long on ground;
The toes were great, the joynt bones round and short,
The shinne bones large, the dew-claws close in port:
Short ioynted was he, hollow-footed eke,
An hart to hunt as any man can seeke.

The Art of Venerie, ut supra, p. 96.

NOTES TO CANTO FOURTH.

Note I.

When Denmark's Raven soared on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till, hovering near, their fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke.—St. I. p. 153.

About the year of God 866, the Danes, under their celebrated leaders Inguar (more properly Agnar) and Hubba, sons, it is said, of the still more celebrated Regnar Lodbrog, invaded Northumberland, bringing with them the magical standard, so often mentioned in poetry, called Reafen, or Raunfan, from its bearing the figure of a Raven:—

> Wrought by the sisters of the Danish king,
> Of furious Ivar in a midnight hour:
> While the sick moon, at their enchanted song
> Wrapt in pale tempest, laboured thro' the clouds,
> The demons of destruction then, they say,
> Were all abroad, and mixing with the woof
> Their baleful power: The sisters ever sung;
> "Shake, standard, shake this ruin on our foes."
>
> *Thomson and Mallet's Alfred.*

The Danes renewed and extended their incursions, and begun to colonize, establishing a kind of capital at York, from which they spread their conquests and incursions in every direction. Stanemore, which divides the mountains of Westmoreland and Cumberland, was probably the boundary of the Danish kingdom in that direction. The district to the west, known in ancient British history by the name of Reged, had never been conquered by the Saxons, and continued to maintain a precarious independence until it was ceded to Malcolm, King of Scots, by William the Conqueror, probably on account of its similarity in language and manners to the neighbouring British kingdom of Strath Clyde.

Upon the extent and duration of the Danish sovereignty in Northumberland, the curious may consult the various authorities quoted in the *Gesta et Vestigia Danorum extra Daniam*, tom. II. p. 40. The most powerful of their Northumbrian leaders seems to have been Ivar, called, from the extent of his conquests, *Widfami*, that is, *The Strider*.

Note II.

Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Force.—St. I. p. 153.

The Tees rises about the skirts of Crossfell, and falls over the cataracts named in the text before it leaves the mountains which divide the North Riding from Cumberland. High-Force is seventy-five feet in height.

Note III.

Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
Fixed on each vale a Runic name.—St. I. p. 154.

The heathen Danes have left several traces of their religion in the upper part of Teesdale. Balder-garth, which derives its name from the unfortunate son of Odin, is a tract of waste land on the very ridge of Stanemore, and a brook, which falls into the Tees near Barnard Castle, is named after the same deity. Thorsgill, of which a description is attempted in Stanza II., is a beautiful little brook and dell, running up behind the ruins of Eglistone Abbey. Thor was the Hercules of the Scandinavian mythology, a dreaded giant-queller, and in that capacity the champion of the gods and the defender of Asgard, the northern Olympus, against the frequent attacks of the inhabitants of Jotunheim. There is an old poem in the Edda of Sœmund, called the Song of Thrym, which turns upon the loss and recovery of the Mace, or Hammer, which was Thor's principal weapon, and on which much of his power seems to have depended. It may be read to great advantage in a version, equally spirited and literal, among the Miscellaneous Translations and Poems of the Honourable William Herbert.

Note IV.

Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood embrued his steel.—St. VI. p. 161.

The O'Neale here meant, for more than one succeeded to the chieftainship during the reign of Elizabeth, was Hugh, the grandson of Con O'Neale, called Con Bacco, or the Lame. His father, Matthew O'Kelly, was illegitimate, and, being the son of a blacksmith's wife, was usually called Matthew the Blacksmith. His father, nevertheless, destined his succession to him; and he was created, by Elizabeth, Baron of Dungannon. Upon the death of Con-Bacco, this Matthew was slain by his brother. Hugh narrowly escaped the same fate, and was protected by the English. Shane O'Neale, his uncle, called Shane Dymas, was succeeded by Turlough Lynogh O'Neale, after whose death, Hugh, having assumed the chieftainship, became nearly as formidable to the English as any by whom it had been possessed. He rebelled repeatedly, and as often made submissions, of which it was usually a condition that he should not any longer assume the title of O'Neale; in lieu of which he was created Earl of Tyrone. But this condition he never observed longer than until the pressure of superior force was withdrawn. His baffling the gallant Earl of Essex in the field, and overreaching him in a treaty, was the induction to that nobleman's tragedy. Lord Mountjoy succeeded in finally subjugating O'Neale; but it was not till the succession of James, to whom he made personal submission, and was

received with civility at court. Yet, according to Morrison, "no respect to him could containe many weomen in those parts, who had lost husbands and children in the Irish warres, from flinging durt and stones at the earle as he passed, and from reuiling him with bitter words: yea, when the earle had been at court, and there obtaining his majesties direction for his pardon and performance of all conditions promised him by the Lord Mountjoy, was about September to returne, hee durst not passe by those parts without direction to the shiriffes, to conuay him with troopes of horse from place to place, till he was safely imbarked and put to sea for Ireland."—*Itinerary*, p. 296.

Note V.

But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave Marshal fought and died.—St. VI. p. 161.

The chief victory which Tyrone obtained over the English was in a battle fought near Blackwater, while he besieged a fort garrisoned by the English, which commanded the passes into his country.

"The captaine and his few warders did with no less courage suffer hunger, and, having eaten the few horses they had, lived vpon hearbes growing in the ditches and wals, suffering all extremities, till the lord-lieutenant, in the moneth of August, sent Sir Henry Bagnal, marshall of Ireland, with the most choice companies of foote and horse troopes of the English army, to victual this fort, and to raise the rebels siege. When the English entered the place and

thicke woods beyond Armagh, on the east side, Tyrone (with all the rebels assembled to him) pricked forward with rage, enuy, and setled rancour against the marshal, assayled the English, and turning his full force against the marshal's person, had the successe to kill him valiantly fighting among the thickest of the rebels. Whereupon the English, being dismayed with his death, the rebels obtained a great victory against them. I terme it great, since the English, from their first arriuall in that kingdome, neuer had receiued so great an ouerthrow as this, commonly called The Defeat of Blackewater; thirteene valiant captaines and 1500 common souldiers (whereof many were of the old companies which had serued in Brittany vnder Generall Norreys) were slaine in the field. The yielding of the fort of Blackwater followed this disaster, when the assaulted guard saw no hope of reliefe; but especially vpon messages sent to Captaine Williams from our broken forces, retired to Armagh, professing that all their safety depended vpon his yielding the fort into the hands of Tyrone, without which danger Captaine Williams professed that no want or miserie should have induced him thereunto."—FYNES MORYSON'S *Itinerary, London*, 1617, *fol. part II. p.* 24.

Tyrone is said to have entertained a personal animosity against the knight-marshal, Sir Henry Bagnal, whom he accused of detaining the letters which he sent to Queen Elizabeth, explanatory of his conduct, and offering terms of submission. The river, called by the English Blackwater, is termed, in Irish, Avon-Duff, which has the same significa-

tion. Both names are mentioned by Spenser in his "Marriage of the Thames and the Medway:"—

> Swift Avon-Duff, which of the Englishmen
> Is called Black-water——

Note VI.

The Tanist he to great O'Neale.—St. VI. p. 162.

"*Eudox.* What is this which you call Tanist and Tanistry? These be names and termes never heard of nor known to us.

"*Iren.* It is a custome amongst all the Irish, that, presently after the death of one of their chiefe lords or captaines, they doe presently assemble themselves to a place generally appointed and knowne unto them, to choose another in his stead, where they doe nominate and elect, for the most part, not the eldest sonne, nor any of the children of the lord deceased, but the next to him in blood, that is, the eldest and worthiest, as commonly the next brother unto him, if he have any, or the next cousin, or so forth, as any is elder in that kindred or sept; and then next to him doe they choose the next of the blood to be Tanist, who shall next succeed him in the said captainry, if he live thereunto.

"*Eudox.* Do they not use any ceremony in this election, for all barbarous nations are commonly great observers of ceremonies and superstitious rites?

"*Iren.* They use to place him that shall be their captaine upon a stone, always reserved to that purpose, and placed commonly upon a hill. In some of which I have seen form-

ed and engraven a foot, which they say was the measure of their first captaine's foot; whereon hee standing, receives an oath to preserve all the auncient former customes of the countrey inviolable, and to deliver up the succession peaceably to his Tanist, and then hath a wand delivered unto him by some whose proper office that is; after which, descending from the stone, he turneth himself round, thrice forwards and thrice backwards.

"*Eudox.* But how is the Tanist chosen?

"*Iren.* They say he setteth but one foot upon the stone, and receiveth the like oath that the captaine did."—SPENSER's *View of the State of Ireland*, apud *Works*, *Lond.* 1805, 8*vo. vol. VIII. p.* 306.

The Tanist, therefore, of O'Neale, was the heir-apparent of his power. This kind of succession appears also to have regulated, in very remote times, the succession to the crown of Scotland. It would have been imprudent, if not impossible, to have asserted a minor's right of succession in those stormy days, when the principles of policy were summed up in my friend Mr Wordsworth's lines:—

——————— the good old rule
Sufficeth them; the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

Note VII.

His plaited hair in elf-locks spread, &c.—St. VIII. p. 164.

There is here an attempt to describe the ancient Irish dress, of which a poet of Queen Elizabeth's day has given us the following particulars:—

I mervailde in my mynde,
  and thereupon did muse,
To see a bride of heavenlie hewe
  an ouglie fere to chuse.
This bride it is the soile,
  the bridegroom is the karne,
With writhed glibbes, like wicked sprits,
  with visage rough and stearne;
With sculles upon their poales,
  instead of civill cappes;
With speares in hand, and swordes by sides,
  to beare of after clappes;
With jackettes long and large,
  which shroud simplicitie,
Though spitfull dartes which they do beare
  importe iniquitie.
Their shirtes be very strange,
  not reaching past the thie;
With pleates on pleates thei pleated are
  as thicke as pleates may lye.
Whose sleaves hang trailing doune
  almost unto the shoe;
And with a mantell commonlie
  the Irish karne do goe.
Now some amongst the reste
  doe use another weede;

A coate I meane, of strange devise,
 which fancie first did breade.
His skirts be very shorte,
 with pleates set thick about,
And Irish trouzes moe to put
 their strange protactours out.

DERRICK'S *Image of Ireland,* apud SOMERS' *Tracts, Edin.* 1809, 4*to. vol. I. p.* 585.

Some curious wooden engravings accompany this poem, from which it would seem that the ancient Irish dress was (the bonnet excepted) very similar to that of the Scottish highlanders. The want of a covering on the head was supplied by the mode of plaiting and arranging their hair, which was called the *glibbe.* These glibbes, according to Spenser, were fit masks for a thief, since, when he wished to disguise himself, he could either cut it off entirely, or so pull it over his eyes as to render it very hard to recognize him. This, however, is nothing to the reprobation with which the same poet regards that favourite part of the Irish dress, the mantle.—

"It is a fit house for an outlaw, a meet bed for a rebel, and an apt cloke for a thiefe. First, the outlaw being for his many crimes and villanyes banished from the townes and houses of honest men, and wandring in waste places far from danger of law, maketh his mantle his house, and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the offence of the earth, and from the sight of men. When it raineth, it is his pent-house; when it bloweth, it is his tent; when it freezeth, it is his tabernacle. In sommer he can wear

it loose, in winter he can wrap it close; at all times he can use it; never heavy, never cumbersome. Likewise for a rebel it is as serviceable: for in his warre that he maketh, (if at least it deserve the name of warre,) when he still flyeth from his foe, and lurketh in the thicke woods and straite passages, waiting for advantages, it is his bed, yea, and almost his household stuff. For the wood is his house against all weathers, and his mantle is his couch to sleep in. Therein he wrapeth himself round, and coucheth himselfe strongly against the gnats, which, in that country, doe more annoy the naked rebels while they keep the woods, and doe more sharply wound them, then all their enemies swords or speares, which can seldom come nigh them: yea, and oftentimes their mantle serveth them when they are neere driven, being wrapped about their left arme, instead of a target, for it is hard to cut thorough with a sword; besides it is light to beare, light to throw away, and being (as they commonly are) naked, it is to them all in all. Lastly, for a thiefe it is so handsome as it may seem it was first invented for him, for under it he may cleanly convey any fit pillage that commeth handsomely in his way, and when he goeth abroad in the night in free-booting, it is his best and surest friend; for lying, as they often do, two or three nights together abroad to watch for their booty, with that they can prettily shroud themselves under a bush or a bankside till they may conveniently do their errand; and when all is over, he can in his mantle passe through any town or company, being close

hooded over his head, as he useth, from knowledge of any to whom he is indangered. Besides this, he, or any man els that is disposed to mischief or villany, may, under his mantle, goe privily armed without suspicion of any, carry his head-piece, his skean, or pistol if he please, to be always in readiness."—SPENSER's *View of the State of Ireland*, apud *Works*, ut supra, *VIII*. 367.

The javelins, or darts, of the Irish, which they threw with great dexterity, appear, from one of the prints already mentioned, to have been about four feet long, with a strong steel head and thick knotted shaft.

Note VIII.

With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous throne.—St. VIII. p. 164.

The Irish chiefs, in their intercourse with the English, and with each other, were wont to assume the language and style of independent royalty. Morrison has preserved a summons from Tyrone to a neighbouring chieftain, which runs in the following terms:—

"O'Neale commendeth him unto you, Morish Fitz Thomas; O'Neale requesteth you, in God's name, to take part with him, and fight for your conscience and right; and in so doing, O'Neale will spend to see you righted in all your affaires, and will help you. And if you come not at O'Neale betwixt this and to-morrow at twelve of the clocke, and take his part, O'Neale is not beholding to you, and will doe

to the uttermost of his power to overthrow you if you come not to him at furthest by Satturday noone. From Knocke Dumayne in Calrie, the fourth of February, 1599.

"O'Neale requesteth you to come speake with him, and doth giue you his word that you shall receive no harme neither in comming nor going from him, whether you be friend or not, and bring with you to O'Neale Gerat Fitzgerald.

"Subscribed O'NEALE."

Nor did the royalty of O'Neale consist in words alone. Sir John Harrington paid him a visit at the time of his truce with Essex, and after mentioning "his fern table, and fern forms, spread under the stately canopy of heaven," he notices what constitutes the real power of every monarch, the love, namely, and allegiance of his subjects. "His guard, for the most part, were beardless boys without shirts; who in the frost wade as familiarly through rivers as water-spaniels. With what charm such a master makes them love him I know not, but if he bid come, they come; if go, they do go; if he say do this, they do it."—*Nugæ Antiquæ, Lond.* 1784, 8*vo. vol. I. p.* 251.

Note IX.

His foster-father was his guide.—St. X. p. 168.

There was no tie more sacred among the Irish than that which connected the foster-father, as well as the nurse herself, with the child they brought up.

"Foster-fathers spend much more time, money, and affection on their foster children than their own; and in return take from them clothes, money for their several professions, and arms, and even for any vicious purposes; fortunes and cattle, not so much by a claim of right as by extortion; and they will even carry those things off as plunder. All who have been nursed by the same person preserve a greater mutual affection and confidence in each other than if they were natural brothers, whom they will even hate for the sake of these. When chid by their parents, they fly to their foster-fathers, who frequently encourage them to make open war on their parents, train them up to every excess of wickedness, and make them most abandoned miscreants: as, on the other hand, the nurses make the young women, whom they bring up for every excess. If a foster-child is sick, it is incredible how soon the nurses hear of it, however distant, and with what solicitude they attend it by day and night."—*Giraldus Cambrensis, quoted by Camden, IV.* 368.

This custom, like many other Irish usages, prevailed till of late in the Scottish Highlands, and was cherished by the chiefs as an easy mode of extending their influence and connection: and even in the Lowlands, during the last century, the connection between the nurse and foster-child was seldom dissolved but by the death of one party.

Note X.

Great Nial of the Pledges Nine.—St. XIV. p. 174.

Niell Naighvallach, or Of the Nine Hostages, is said to have been monarch of all Ireland, during the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century. He exercised a predatory warfare on the coasts of England and of Bretagne, or Armorica; and from the latter country brought off the celebrated Saint Patrick, a youth of sixteen, among other captives, whom he transported to Ireland. Neal derived his epithet from nine nations, or tribes, whom he held under his subjection, and from whom he took hostages. From one of Neal's sons were derived the Kinel-eoguin, or Race of Tyrone, which afforded monarchs both to Ireland and to Ulster. Neill (according to O'Flaherty's Ogygia) was killed by a poisoned arrow, in one of his descents on the coast of Bretagne.

Note XI.

Shane-Dymas wild ——— St. XIV. p. 174.

This Shane-Dymas, or John the Wanton, held the title and power of O'Neale in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign, against whom he rebelled repeatedly.

" This chieftain is handed down to us as the most proud and profligate man on earth. He was immoderately addicted to women and wine. He is said to have had 200 tuns of wine at once in his cellar at Dandram, but usquebaugh was his favourite liquor. He spared neither age nor condition

of the fair sex. Altho' so illiterate that he could not write, he was not destitute of address; his understanding was strong, and his courage daring. He had 600 men for his guard; 4000 foot, 1000 horse for the field. He claimed superiority over all the lords of Ulster, and called himself king thereof. When commissioners were sent to treat with him, he said, 'That, tho' the queen were his sovereign lady, he never made peace with her *but at her lodging*; that she had made a wise Earl of Macartymore, but that he kept as good a man as he; that he cared not for so mean a title as earl; that his blood and power were better than the best; that his ancestors were kings of Ulster; and that he would give place to none.' His kinsman, the Earl of Kildare, having persuaded him of the folly of contending with the crown of England, he resolved to attend the queen, but in a style suited to his princely dignity. He appeared in London with a magnificent train of Irish Galloglasses, arrayed in the richest habiliments of their country, their heads bare, their hair flowing on their shoulders, with their long and open sleaves dyed with saffron. Thus dressed, and surcharged with military harness, and armed with battle-axes, they afforded an astonishing spectacle to the citizens, who regarded them as the intruders of some very distant part of the globe. But at court his versatility now prevailed, his title to the sovereignty of Tyrone was pleaded from English laws and Irish institutions, and his allegations were so specious, that the queen dismissed him with presents and assurances of favour. In England this transaction was looked on as the humiliation

of a repenting rebel; in Tyrone it was considered as a treaty of peace between two potentates."—CAMDEN'S *Britannia, by Gough, Lond.* 1806, *fol. vol. IV. p.* 442.

When reduced to extremity by the English, and forsaken by his allies, this Shane-Dymas fled to Clandeboy, then occupied by a colony of Scottish highlanders of the family of MacDonell. He was at first courteously received, but by degrees they began to quarrel about the slaughter of some of their friends whom Shane-Dymas had put to death, and, advancing from words to deeds, fell upon him with their broad-swords, and cut him to pieces. After his death a law was made that none should presume to take the name and title of O'Neale.

Note XII.

——————— *Geraldine.*—St. XIV. p. 174.

The O'Neales were closely allied with this powerful and warlike family, for Henry Owen O'Neale married the daughter of Thomas Earl of Kildare, and their son Con-More married his cousin-german, a daughter of Gerald Earl of Kildare. This Con-More cursed any of his posterity who should learn the English language, sow corn, or build houses, so as to invite the English to settle in their country. Others ascribe this anathema to his son Con-Bacco. Fearflatha O'Gnive, bard to the O'Neales of Clannaboy, complains in the same spirit of the towers and ramparts with which the strangers had *disfigured* the fair sporting fields of Erin. See Walker's *Irish Bards*, p. 140.

Note XIII.

He chose that honoured flag to bear.—St. XVI. p. 176.

Lacy informs us, in the old play already quoted, how the cavalry raised by the country gentlemen for Charles's service were usually officered. "You, cornet, have a name that's proper for all cornets to be called by, for they are all beardless boys in our army. The most part of our horse were raised thus:—The honest country gentleman raises the troop at his own charge; then he gets a low-country lieutenant to fight his troop safely; then he sends for his son from school to be his cornet; and then he puts off his child's coat to put on a buff coat: and this is the constitution of our army."

Note XIV.

——— *his page, the next degree*
In that old time to chivalry.—St. XVI. p. 176.

Originally the order of chivalry embraced three ranks:—1. The Page; 2. The Squire; 3. The Knight;—a gradation which seems to have been imitated in the mystery of free-masonry. But before the reign of Charles I. the custom of serving as a squire had fallen into disuse, though the order of the page was still, to a certain degree, in observance. This state of servitude was so far from inferring any thing degrading, that it was considered as the regular school for acquiring every quality necessary for future distinction. The proper nature, and the decay of the institution, are pointed out by old Ben Jonson, with his own forcible moral colouring. The

dialogue occurs between Lovel, "a compleat gentleman, a soldier, and a scholar, known to have been page to the old Lord Beaufort, and so to have followed him in the French wars, after companion of his studies, and left guardian to his son," and the facetious Goodstock, host of the Light Heart. Lovel had offered to take Goodstock's son for his page, which the latter, in reference to the recent abuse of the establishment, declares as "a desperate course of life:"—

Lovell. Call you that desperate, which by a line
Of institution, from our ancestors
Hath been derived down to us, and received
In a succession, for the noblest way
Of breeding up our youth, in letters, arms,
Fair mien, discourses, civil exercise,
And all the blazon of a gentleman?
Where can he learn to vault, to ride, to fence,
To move his body gracefuller? to speak
His language purer? or to tune his mind,
Or manners, more to the harmony of nature,
Than in the nurseries of nobility?
Host. Aye, that was when the nursery's self was noble,
And only virtue made it, not the market,
That titles were not vented at the drum,
Or common outcry; goodness gave the greatness,
And greatness worship: every house became
An academy of honour; and those parts
We see departed, in the practice, now,
Quite from the institution.
Lov. Why do you say so?
Or think so enviously? do they not still
Learn there the Centaur's skill, the art of Thrace,

To ride? or, Pollux' mystery, to fence?
The Pyrrhic gestures, both to dance and spring
In armour, to be active in the wars?
To study figures, numbers, and proportions,
May yield 'em great in counsels, and the arts
Grave Nestor and the wise Ulysses practised?
To make their English sweet upon their tongue!
As reverend Chaucer says?
Host. Sir, you mistake;
To play Sir Pandarus my copy hath it,
And carry messages to Madam Cressida;
Instead of backing the brave steed o' mornings,
To court the chambermaid; and for a leap
O' the vaulting horse to ply the vaulting house:
For exercise of arms a bale of dice,
Or two or three packs of cards to shew the cheat,
And nimbleness of hand; mistake a cloak
Upon my lord's back, and pawn it; ease his pocket
Of a superfluous watch; or geld a jewel
Of an odd stone or so; twinge two or three buttons
From off my lady's gown: these are the arts
Or seven liberal deadly sciences
Of pagery, or rather paganism,
As the tides run; to which, if he apply him,
He may perhaps take a degree at Tyburn
A year the earlier; come to take a lecture
Upon Aquinas at St Thomas a Waterings,
And so go forth a laureat in hemp circle!

BEN JONSON'S *New Inn, Act I. Scene III.*

NOTES TO CANTO FIFTH.

Note I.

Rokeby ——————— St. III. p. 208.

The ancient castle of Rokeby stood exactly upon the site of the present mansion, by which a part of its walls is inclosed. It is surrounded by a profusion of fine wood, and the park in which it stands is adorned by the junction of the Greta and of the Tees. The title of Baron Rokeby of Armagh was in 1777 conferred on the Right Reverend Richard Robinson, Primate of Ireland, descended of the Robinsons, formerly of Rokeby in Yorkshire.

Note II.

Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
I can count them name by name.—St. IX. p. 218.

The following brief pedigree of this very ancient and once powerful family, was kindly supplied to the author by Mr Rokeby of Northamptonshire, descended of the ancient Barons of Rokeby :—

Pedigree of the House of Rokeby.

1. Sir Alex. Rokeby, Knt. married to Sir Hump. Liftle's[1] daughter.
2. Ralph Rokeby, Esq. to Tho. Lumley's daughter.
3. Sir Tho. Rokeby, Knt. to Tho. Hubborn's daughter.
4. Sir Ralph Rokeby, Knt. to Sir Ralph Biggott's daughter.
5. Sir Tho. Rokeby, Knt. to Sir John de Melsass' daughter of Bennet-Hall in Holderness.
6. Ralph Rokeby, Esq. to Sir Bryan Stapleton's daughter of Weighill,
7. Sir Thomas Rokeby, Knt. to Sir Ralph Ury's daughter.[2]
8. Ralph Rokeby, Esq. to daughter of Mansfield, heir of Morton.[3]
9. Sir Tho. Rokeby, Knt. to Stroode's daughter and heir.
10. Sir Ralph Rokeby, Knt. to Sir Jas. Strangwayes' daughter.
11. Sir Thomas Rokeby, Knt. to Sir John Hotham's daughter.
12. Ralph Rokeby, Esq. to Danby of Yafforth daughter and heir.[4]
13. Tho. Rokeby, Esq. to Rob. Constable's daughter of Cliff, serjt. at law.
14. Christopher Rokeby, Esq. to Lasscells of Brackenburgh's daughter.[5]
15. Thos. Rokeby, Esq. to the daughter of Thweng.
16. Sir Thomas Rokeby, Knt. to Sir Ralph Lawson's daughter of Brough.
17. Frans. Rokeby, Esq. to Faucett's daughter, citizen of London.
18. Thos. Rokeby, Esq. to the daughter of Wicliffe of Gales.

High Sheriffs of Yorkshire.

1337. 11 Edw. 3. Ralph Hastings and Thos. de Rokeby.
1343. 17 Edw. 3. Thos. de Rokeby, pro sept. annis.

---

[1] Lisle.
[2] Temp. Edw. 2di.
[3] Temp. Edw. 3tii.
[4] Temp. Henr. 7mi. and from him is the house of Skyers of a fourth brother.
[5] From him is the house of Hotham, and of the second brother that had issue.

1358. 25 Edw. 3. Sir Thomas Rokeby, Justiciary of Ireland for six years; died at the castle of Kilka.
1407. 8 Hen. 4. Thos. Rokeby Miles, defeated and slew the Duke of Northumberland at the battle of Bramham Moor.
1411. 12 Hen. 4. Thos. Rokeby Miles.
1686. . . . . Thos. Rokeby, Esq.
1539. . . . . Robert Holgate, Bish. of Landaff, afterwards P. of York, Ld President of the Council for the Preservation of Peace in the North.
1564. 6 Eliz. Tho. Younge, Archbishop of Yorke, Ld President.
30 Hen. 8. Tho. Rokeby, L.L.D. one of the Council.
Jn Rokeby, L.L.D. one of the Council.
1572. 15 Eliz. Hen. Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon, Ld President.
Jo. Rokeby, Esq. one of the Council.
Jo. Rokeby, L.L.D. ditto.
Ralph Rokeby, Esq. one of the Secretaries.
1574. 17 Eliz. Jo. Rokeby, Precentor of York.
7 Will. 3. Sir J. Rokeby, Knt. one of the Justices of the King's Bench.

The family of De Rokeby came over with the Conqueror.
The old motto belonging to the family is *In Bivio Dextra*.
The arms, argent, cherron sable, between three rooks proper.

There is somewhat more to be found in our family in the Scottish History about the affairs of Dun-Bretton town, but what it is, and in what time, I know not, nor can have convenient leisure to search. But Parson Blackwood, the Scottish chaplain to the Lord of Shrewsbury, recited to me once a piece of a Scottish song, wherein was mentioned that Wm Wallis, the great deliverer of the Scotts from the English bondage, should, at Dun-Bretton, have been brought up under a Rokeby, captain then of that place; and as he walked on a cliff, should thrust him on a sudden into the sea, and thereby have gotten that hold, which, I think, was about the 33d of Edw. I. or before. Thus, leaving our ancestors of record, we must also with them leave the Chronicle of

Malmesbury Abbey, called Eulogium Historiarum, out of which Mr Leland reporteth this history, and coppy down unwritten story, the which have yet the testimony of later times, and the fresh memory of men yet alive, for their warrant and creditt, of whom I have learned it, that in K. Henry the 7th's reign, one Ralph Rokeby, Esq. was owner of Morton, and I guess that this was he that deceived the fryars of Richmond with his felon swine, on which a jargon was made.

The above is a quotation from a manuscript written by Ralph Rokeby; when he lived is uncertain.

To what metrical Scottish tradition Parson Blackwood alluded, it would be now in vain to enquire. But in Blind Harry's History of Sir William Wallace, we find a legend of one Rukbie, whom he makes keeper of Stirling Castle under the English usurpation, and whom Wallace slays with his own hand:

In the great press Wallace and Rukbie met,
With his good sword a stroke upon him set;
Derfly to death the old Rukbie he drave,
But his two sons scaped among the lave.

These sons, according to the romantic minstrel, surrendered the castle on conditions, and went back to England, but returned to Scotland in the days of Bruce, when one of them became again keeper of Stirling Castle. Immediately after this achievement follows another engagement, between Wallace and those Western Highlanders who embraced the English interest, at a pass in Glendonchart, where many

were precipitated into the lake over a precipice. These circumstances may have been confused in the narrative of Parson Blackwood, or in the recollection of Mr Rokeby.

In the old ballad of Chevy Chace, there is mentioned, among the English warriors, "Sir Raff the ryche Rugbe," which may apply to Sir Ralph Rokeby, the tenth baron in the pedigree. The more modern copy of the ballad runs thus:—

> Good Sir Ralph Raby there was slain,
> Whose prowess did surmount.

This would rather seem to relate to one of the Nevilles of Raby. But as the whole ballad is romantic, accuracy is not to be looked for.

Note III.

———————— *the Felon Sow.*—St. IX. p. 219.

The ancient minstrels had a comic as well as a serious strain of romance, and although the examples of the latter are by far the most numerous, they are, perhaps, the less valuable. The comic romance was a sort of parody upon the usual subjects of minstrel poetry. If the latter described deeds of heroic achievement, and the events of the battle, the tourney, and the chace, the former, as in the tournament of Tottenham, introduced a set of clowns debating in the field, with all the assumed circumstances of chivalry; or, as in the Hunting of the Hare (see Weber's *Metrical Ro-*

mances, vol. III.) persons of the same description, following the chace, with all the grievous mistakes and blunders incident to such unpractised sportsmen. The idea, therefore, of Don Quixote's frenzy, although inimitably embodied and brought out, was not perhaps in the abstract altogether original. One of the very best of these mock romances, and which has no small portion of comic humour, is the Hunting of the Felon Sow of Rokeby by the Friars of Richmond. Ralph Rokeby, who (for the jest's sake apparently) bestowed this intractable animal on the convent of Richmond, seems to have flourished in the time of Henry VII. which, since we know not the date of Friar Theobald's Wardenship, to which the poem refers us, may indicate that of the composition itself. Morton, the Mortham of the text, is mentioned as being this facetious baron's place of residence; accordingly Leland notices that "Mr Rokeby hath a place caulled Mortham, a litle beneth Grentey-bridge, almost on the mouth of Grentey." That no information may be lacking which is in my power to supply, I have to notice, that the Mistress Rokeby of the romance, who so charitably refreshed the sow after she had discomfited Friar Middleton and his auxiliaries, was, as appears from the pedigree of the Rokeby family, daughter and heir of Danby of Yafforth.

This curious poem was first published in Mr Whitaker's History of Craven, but from an inaccurate manuscript, not corrected very happily. It was transferred by Mr Evans to the new edition of his ballads, with some well-judged con-

jectural improvements. I have been induced to give a more authentic and full, though still an imperfect, edition of this humorous composition, from being furnished with a copy from a manuscript in the possession of Mr Rokeby, to whom I have acknowledged my obligations in the last note. It has three or four stanzas more than that of Mr Whitaker, and the language seems, where they differ, to have the more ancient and genuine readings.

The Felon Sow of Rokeby and the Friars of Richmond.

YE men that will of aunters[1] winne,
That late within this land hath beene,
Of one I will you tell;
And of a sew[2] that was sea[3] strang,
Alas! that ever she lived sea lang,
For fell[4] folk did she whell.[5]

She was mare[6] than other three,
The griseliest beast that ere might bee,
Her head was great and gray;
She was bred in Rokeby wood,
There was few that thither goed,[7]
That came on live away.[8]

[1] Both the MS. and Mr Whitaker's copy read *ancestors*, evidently a corruption of *aunters*, adventures, as corrected by Mr Evans.
[2] Sow, according to provincial pronunciation. [3] So; Yorkshire dialect. [4] Fele, many, Sax.
[5] A corruption of *quell*, to kill. [6] More, greater. [7] Went. [8] Alive.

Her walk was endlong[9] Greta side;
There was no bren[1] that durst her bide,
That was froe[2] heaven to hell;
Nor never man that had that might,
That ever durst come in her sight,
Her force it was so fell.

Ralph of Rokeby with good will,
The fryers of Richmond gave her till,
Full well to garre[4] them fare;
Fryar Middleton by his name,
He was sent to fetch her hame,
That rued him sine[5] full sare.

With him tooke he wight men two,
Pater Dale was one of thoe,
That ever was brim as beare;[6]
And well durst strike with sword and knife,
And fight full manly for his life,
What time as mister ware.[7]

These three men went at God's will,
This wicked sew while they come till,
Liggan[8] under a tree;
Rugg and rusty was her haire;
She raise up with a felon fare,[9]
To fight against the three.

She was so grisely for to meete,
She rave the earth up with her feete,

---

[9] Along the side of Greta. [1] Barn, child, man in general. [2] From. [3] To. [4] Make. [5] Since. [6] Fierce as a bear. Mr Whitaker's copy reads, perhaps in consequence of mistaking the MS.—T'other was Bryan of Bear. [7] Need were. Mr Whitaker reads *musters*. [8] Lying. [9] A fierce countenance or manner.

And barke came fro the tree;
When Fryar Middleton her saugh,[1]
Weet ye well he might not laugh,
Full earnestly look't hee.

These men of aunters that was so wight,[2]
They bound them baudly[3] for to fight,
And strike at her full sare;
Untill a kiln they garred her flee,
Wold God send them the victory,
They wold aske him noa mare.

The sew was in the kiln hole down,
As they were on the balke aboon,[4]
For[5] hurting of their feet;
They were so saulted[6] with this sew,
That among them was a stalworth stew,
The kelne began to reeke.

Durst noe man neigh her with his hand,
But putt a rape[7] downe with his wand,
And haltered her full meete;
They hurled her forth against her will,
Whiles they came unto a hill
A little fro the streete.[8]

And there she made them such a fray,
If they should live to Doomes-day,

---

[1] Saw.
[2] Wight, brave. The Rokeby MS. reads *incounters*, and Mr Whitaker, *auncestors*.
[3] Boldly. [4] On the beam above. [5] To prevent. [6] Assaulted.
[7] Rope. [8] Watling-street; see the sequel.

They tharrow[9] it ne'er forgett;
She braded[1] upon every side,
And ran on them gaping full wide,
For nothing would she lett.[2]

She gave such brades[3] at the band,
That Pater Dale had in his hand,
He might not hold his feet.
She chafed them to and fro,
The wight men was never soe woe,
Their measure was not so meete.

She bound her boldly to abide;
To Pater Dale she came aside
With many a hideous yell:
She gaped so wide and cried soe hee,
The fryar said, "I conjure thee,[4]
Thou art a feind of hell.

"Thou art come hither for some traine,[5]
I conjure thee to go againe
Where thou wast wont to dwell."
He sayned[6] him with crosse and creede,
Took forth a book, began to reade,
In St John his gospell.

The sew she would not Latin heare,
But rudely rushed att the frear,

---

9 Dare. 1 Rushed. 2 Leave it. 3 Pulls.

4 This line is wanting in Mr Whitaker's copy, whence it has been conjectured that something is wanting after this stanza, which now there is no occasion to suppose.

5 Evil device. 6 Blessed, Fr.

That blinked all his blee;[7]
And when she would have taken her hold,
The fryar leaped as Jesus wold,
And bealed[8] him with a tree.

She was as brim[9] as any beare,
For all their meete to labour there,[1]
To them it was no boote:
Upon trees and bushes that by her stood,
She ranged as shee was wood,[2]
And rave them up by roote.

He sayd, "Alas, that I was frear!
And I shall be rugged[3] in sunder here,
Hard is my destinie!
Wist[4] my brethren in this houre,
That I was sett in such a stoure,[5]
They would pray for me."

This wicked beast that wrought this woe,
Tooke that rape from the other two,
And then they fledd all three;
They fledd away by Watling-streete,
They had no succour but their feet,
It was the more pitty.

---

[7] Lost his colour. [8] Sheltered himself. [9] Fierce.

[1] The MS. reads *to labour weere*. The text seems to mean that all their labour to obtain their intended meat was of no use to them. Mr Whitaker reads,

She was as brim as any boar,
And gave a grisly hideous roar,
To them it was no boot.

Besides the want of connection between the last line and the two former, the second has a very modern sound, and the reading of the Rokeby MS. with the slight alteration in the text, is much better. [2] Mad. [3] Torn, pulled. [4] Knew. [5] Combat, perilous fight.

The feild it was both lost and wonne;[6]
The sew went hame, and that full soone,
To Morton on the Greene;
When Ralph of Rokeby saw the rape,[7]
He wist[8] that there had been debate,
Whereat the sew had beene.

He bad them stand out of her way,
For she had had a sudden fray,—
"I saw never so keene;
Some new things shall we heare
Of her and Middleton the frear,
Some battell hath there beene."

But all that served him for nought,
Had they not better succour sought,
They were served therefore loe.
Then Mistress Rokeby came anon,
And for her brought shee meate full soone,
The sew came her unto.

She gave her meate upon the flower,
* * * * *[9]
[*Hiatus valde deflendus.*]

When Fryer Middleton came home,
His brethren was full fain ilkone,[1]
And thanked God of his life;
He told them all unto the end,
How he had foughten with a fiend,
And lived through mickle strife.

---

[6] This stanza, with the two following, and the fragment of a fourth, are not in Mr Whitaker's edition. [7] The rope about the sow's neck. [8] Knew. [9] This line is almost illegible.
[1] Each one.

"We gave her battell half a day,
And sithen[9] was fain to fly away,
For saving of our life.[1]
And Pater Dale would never blinn,[2]
But as fast as he could ryn,[3]
Till he came to his wife."

The warden said, "I am full woe,
That ever ye should be torment so,
But wee with you had beene!
Had wee been there your brethren all,
Wee should have garred the warle[4] fall,
That wrought you all this teyne.[5]

Fryer Middleton said soon, "Nay,
In faith you would have fled away,
When most mister[6] had been;
You will all speake words at hame,
A man would ding[7] you every ilke ane,
And if it be as I weine."

He look't so griesly all that night,
The warden said, "Yon man will fight
If you say ought but good:
Yon guest[8] hath greived him so sare,
Hold your tongues and speake noe mare,
Hee looks as hee were wood."

---

[9] Since then, after that. [1] The above lines are wanting in Mr Whitaker's copy.
[2] Cease, stop. [3] Run. [4] Warlock, or wizzard. [5] Harm. [6] Need.
[7] Beat. The copy in Mr Whitaker's History of Craven reads, perhaps better,—
The fiend would ding you down ilk one.
[8] "Yon guest" may be yon *gest*, i. e. that adventure; or it may mean yon *ghaist*, or apparition, which in old poems is applied sometimes to what is supernaturally hideous. The printed copy reads,—The beast hath, &c.

The warden waged[9] on the morne,
Two boldest men that ever were borne,
I weine, or ever shall be;
The one was Gibbert Griffin's son,
Full mickle worship has he wonne,
Both by land and sea.

The other was a bastard son of Spain,
Many a Sarazin hath he slain,
His dint[1] hath gart them die.
These two men the battle undertooke
Against the sew, as says the booke,
And sealed security,

That they should boldly bide and fight,
And skomfit her in maine and might,
Or therefore should they die.
The warden sealed to them againe,
And said, "In feild if ye be slain,
This condition make I:

"We shall for you pray, sing, and read
To doomesday with hearty speede,
With all our progeny."
Then the letters well was made,
Bands bound with seales brade,[2]
As deeds of armes should be.

These men of armes that weere soe wight,
With armour and with brandes bright,

---

[9] Hired, a Yorkshire phrase. [1] Blow. [2] Broad, large.

They went this sew to see;
She made on them slike a rerd,[3]
That for her they were sare afer'd,
And almost bound to flee.

She came roveing them againe;
That saw the bastard son of Spaine,
He braded[4] out his brand;
Full spiteously at her he strake,
For all the fence that he could make,
She gat sword out of hand;
And rave in sunder half his sheilde,
And bare him backward in the feilde,
He might not her gainstand.

She would have riven his privich geare,
But Gilbert with his sword of werre,
He strake at her full strong,
On her shoulder till she held the swerd;
Then was good Gilbert sore afer'd,
When the blade brake in throng.[5]

Since in his hands he hath her tane,
She tooke him by the shoulder bane,[6]
And held her hold full fast,
She strave so stiffly in that stower,[7]
That thorough all his rich armour
The blood came at the last.

Then Gilbert greived was sea sare,
That he rave off both hide and haire,

---

[3] Such like a roar. [4] Drew out. [5] In the combat. [6] Bone. [7] Meeting, battle.

The flesh came fro the bone;
And all with force he fell'd her there,
And wann her worthily in werre,
And band her him alone.

And lift her on a horse sea hee,
Into two panyers well-made of a tree,
And to Richmond they did hay:[8]
When they saw her come,
They sang merrily Te Deum,
The fryers on that day.[9]

They thanked God and St Francis,
As they had won the beast of pris,[1]
And never a man was slaine:
There did never a man more manly,
Knight Marcus, nor yett Sir Gui,
Nor Loth of Louthyane.[2]

If ye will any more of this,
In the fryars of Richmond 'tis
In parchment good and fine;
And how Fryar Middleton that was so kend,[3]
At Greta-bridge conjur'd a feind
In likeness of a swine.

It is well known to many a man,
That Fryar Theobald was warden than,

---

[8] Hie, hasten. [9] The MS. reads mistakenly *every* day. [1] Price.
[2] The father of Sir Gawain in the romance of Arthur and Merlin. The MS. is thus corrupted,—
More loth of Louth Ryme.
[3] Well known, or perhaps kind, well disposed.

And this fell in his time;
And Christ them bless both farre and neare,
All that for solace list this to heare,
And him that made the rhime.

Ralph Rokeby with full good will,
The fryars of Richmond he gave her till,
This sew to mend their fare:
Fryar Middleton by his name,
Would needs bring the fat sew hame,
That rued him since full sare.

Note IV.

The Filea of O'Neale was he.—St. X. p. 220.

The Filea, or Ollamh Re Dan, was the proper bard, or, as the name literally implies, poet. Each chieftain of distinction had one or more in his service, whose office was usually hereditary. The late ingenious Mr Cooper Walker has assembled a curious collection of particulars concerning this order of men in his Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards. There were itinerant bards of less elevated rank, but all were held in the highest veneration. The English, who considered them as chief supporters of the spirit of national independence, were much disposed to proscribe this race of poets, as Edward I. is said to have done in Wales. Spenser, while he admits the merit of their wild poetry, as "savouring of sweet wit and good invention, and sprinkled with some pretty flowers of their natural device," yet rigorously condemns the whole application of their poetry, as abased to "the gracing of wickedness and vice." The household min-

strel was admitted even to the feast of the prince whom he served, and sat at the same table. It was one of the customs of which Sir Richard Sewry, to whose charge Richard II. committed the instruction of four Irish monarchs in the civilization of the period, found it most difficult to break his royal disciples, though he had also much ado to subject them to other English rules, and particularly to reconcile them to wear breeches. "The kyng, my souerevigne lord's entent was, that in maner, countenaunce, and apparell of clothyng they sholde use according to the maner of Englande, for the kynge thought to make them all four knyghtes: they had a fayre house to lodge in, in Duvelyn, and I was charged to abyde styll with them, and not to departe; and so two or three dayes I suffered them to do as they lyst, and sayde nothyng to them, but folowed their owne appetytes; they wolde sytte at the table, and make countenance nother good nor fayre. Than I thought I shulde cause them to chaunge that maner; they wolde cause their mynstrells, their seruauntes, and varlettes to sytte with them, and to eate in their owne dyssche, and to drinke of their cuppes; and they shewed me that the usage of their countre was good, for they sayd in all thyngs (except their beddes) they were and lyved as comen. So the fourthe day I ordayned other tables to be couered in the hall, after the usage of Englande, and I made these four knyghtes to sytte at the hyghe table, and there mynstrels at another borde, and their seruauntes and varlettes at another byneth them, wherof by semynge they were displeased, and beheld each other, and wolde not eate,

and sayde, how I wolde take fro them their good usage, wherin they had been norished. Than I answered them, smylyng, to apeace them, that it was not honourable for their estates to do as they dyde before, and that they must leave it, and use the custom of Englande, and that it was the kynge's pleasure they shulde so do, and how he was charged so to order them. Whan they harde that, they suffred it, bycause they had putte themselfe under the obeysance of the kynge of England, and parceuered in the same as long as I was with them; yet they had one use which I knew was well used in their countre, and that was, they dyde were no breches; I caused breches of lynen clothe to be made for them. Whyle I was with them I caused them to leaue many rude thynges, as well in clothying as in other causes. Moche ado I had at the fyrst to cause them to weare gownes of sylke, furred with myneuere and gray: for before these kynges thought themselfe well apparelled whan they had on a mantell. They rode alwayes without saddles and styropes, and with great payne I made them to ride after our usage."—Lord Berners' *Froissart, Lond.* 1812, *4to. II.* 621.

The influence of these bards upon their patrons, and their admitted title to interfere in matters of the weightiest concern, may be also proved from the behaviour of one of them at an interview between Thomas Fitzgerald, son of the Earl of Kildare, then about to renounce the English allegiance, and the Lord Chancellor Cromer, who made a long and goodly oration to dissuade him from his purpose. The young lord

had come to the council "armed and weaponed," and attended by seven score horsemen in their shirts of mail; and we are assured that the chancellor, having set forth his oration "with such a lamentable action as his cheekes were all beblubbered with teares, the horsemen, namelie, such as understood not English, began to diuine what the lord-chancelor meant with all this long circumstance; some of them reporting that he was preaching a sermon, others said that he stood making of some heroicall poetry in the praise of the Lord Thomas. And thus as every idiot shot his foolish bolt at the wise chancellor his discourse, who in effect did nought else but drop pretious stones before hogs, one Bard de Nelan, an Irish rithmour, and a rotten sheepe to infect a whole flocke, was chatting of Irish verses, as though his toong had run on pattens, in commendation of the Lord Thomas, investing him with the title of Silken Thomas, bicause his horsemens jacks were gorgeously imbrodered with silke: and in the end he told him that he lingered there ouer long. Whereat the Lord Thomas being quickened,"[1] as Hollinshed expresses it, bid defiance to the chancellor, threw down contemptuously the sword of office, which, in his father's absence, he held as deputy, and rushed forth to engage in open insurrection.

[1] Holinshed, Lond. 1808, 4to. vol. VI. p. 291.

Note V.

Ah, Clandeboy! thy kindly floor
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more.—St. X. p. 221.

Clandeboy is a district of Ulster, formerly possessed by the sept of the O'Neales, and Slieve-Donard a romantic mountain in the same province. The clan was ruined after Tyrone's great rebellion, and their places of abode laid desolate. The ancient Irish, wild and uncultivated in other respects, did not yield even to their descendants in practising the most free and extended hospitality, and doubtless the bards mourned the decay of the mansion of their chiefs in strains similar to the verses of the British Llywarch Hen on a similar occasion, which are affecting, even through the discouraging medium of a literal translation.—

Silent-breathing gale, long wilt thou be heard!
There is scarcely another deserving praise,
Since Urien is no more.

Many a dog that scented well the prey, and aërial hawk,
Have been trained on this floor
Before Erlleon became polluted . . .

This hearth, ah, will it not be covered with nettles!
Whilst its defender lived,
More congenial to it was the foot of the needy petitioner.

This hearth, will it not be covered with green sod!
In the lifetime of Owain and Elphin,
Its ample cauldron boiled the prey taken from the foe.

This hearth, will it not be covered with toad-stools!
Around the viand it prepared, more cheering was
The clattering sword of the fierce dauntless warrior.

This hearth, will it not be overgrown with spreading brambles!
Till now logs of burning wood lay on it,
Accustomed to prepare the gifts of Reged!

This hearth, will it not be covered with thorns!
More congenial on it would have been the mixed group
Of Owain's social friends united in harmony.

This hearth, will it not be covered over with the ants!
More adapted to it would have been the bright torches
And harmless festivities!

This hearth, will it not be covered with dock-leaves!
More congenial on its floor would have been
The mead, and the talking of wine-cheer'd warriors.

This hearth, will it not be turned up by the swine!
More congenial to it would have been the clamour of men,
And the circling horns of the banquet.

Heroic Elegies of Llywarc Hen, by Owen,
Lond. 1792, *8vo. p.* 41.

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without bed—
I must weep awhile, and then be silent!

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without candle—
Except God doth, who will endue me with patience!

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without being lighted—
Be thou encircled with spreading silence!

The hall of Cynddylan, gloomy seems its roof,
Since the sweet smile of humanity is no more—
Woe to him that saw it, if he neglects to do good!

The hall of Cynddylan, art thou not bereft of thy appearance,
Thy shield is in the grave;
Whilst he lived there was no broken roof!

The hall of Cynddylan is without love this night,
Since he that owned it is no more—
Ah, death! it will be but a short time he will leave me!

The hall of Cynddylan is not easy this night,
On the top of the rock of Hydwyth,
Without its lord, without company, without the circling feasts!

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without songs—
Tears afflict the cheeks!

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without family—
My over-flowing tears gush out!

The hall of Cynddylan pierces me to see it,
Without a covering, without fire—
My general dead, and I alive myself!

The hall of Cynddylan is the seat of chill grief this night,
After the respect I experienced;
Without the men, without the women, who reside there!

The hall of Cynddylan is silent this night,
After losing its master—
The great merciful God, what shall I do!

Ibid. p. 77.

Note VI.

—*Marwood-chace and Toller-hill.*—St. XII. p. 225.

Marwood-chace is the old park extending along the Durham side of the Tees, attached to Barnard-castle. Toller-hill is an eminence on the Yorkshire side of the river, commanding a superb view of the ruins.

Note VII.

———— *Hawthornden.*—St. XIV. p. 230.

Drummond of Hawthornden was in the zenith of his reputation as a poet during the civil wars. He died in 1649.

Note VIII.

MacCurtin's harp.—St. XIV. p. 230.

" MacCurtin, hereditary Ollamh of North Munster, and Filea to Donough, Earl of Thomond, and President of Munster. This nobleman was amongst those who were prevailed upon to join Elizabeth's forces. Soon as it was known that he had basely abandoned the interests of his country, MacCurtin presented an adulatory poem to Mac Carthy, chief of South Munster, and of the Eugenian line, who, with O'Neil, O'Donnel, Lacy, and others, were deeply engaged in protecting their violated country. In this poem

he dwells with rapture on the courage and patriotism of MacCarthy; but the verse that should (according to an established law of the order of the bards) be introduced in the praise of O'Brien, he turns into severe satire;—'How am I afflicted (says he) that the descendant of the great Brien Boiromh cannot furnish me with a theme worthy the honour and glory of his exalted race!' Lord Thomond hearing this, vowed vengeance on the spirited bard, who fled for refuge to the county of Cork. One day, observing the exasperated nobleman and his equipage at a small distance, he thought it was in vain to fly, and pretended to be suddenly seized with the pangs of death; directing his wife to lament over him, and tell his lordship that the sight of him, by awakening the sense of his ingratitude, had so much affected him that he could not support it; and desired her at the same time to tell his lordship that he entreated, as a dying request, his forgiveness. Soon as Lord Thomond arrived, the feigned tale was related to him. The nobleman was moved to compassion, and not only declared that he most heartily forgave him, but, opening his purse, presented the fair mourner with some pieces to inter him. This instance of his lordship's pity and generosity gave courage to the trembling bard, who, suddenly springing up, recited an extemporaneous ode in praise of Donough, and, re-entering into his service, became once more his favourite."—WALKER'S *Memoirs of the Irish Bards, Lond.* 1786, *4to. p.* 141.

Note IX.

The ancient English minstrel's dress.—St. XV. p. 231.

Among the entertainments presented to Elizabeth at Kenelworth Castle, was the introduction of a person designed to represent a travelling minstrel, who entertained her with a solemn story out of the Acts of King Arthur. Of this person's dress and appearance Mr Laneham has given us a very accurate account, transferred by Bishop Percy to the preliminary dissertation on minstrels, prefixed to his Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. I.

Note X.

Littlecote-hall.—St. XXVII. p. 250.

The tradition from which the ballad is founded was supplied by a friend, whose account I will not do the injustice to abridge, as it contains an admirable picture of an old English hall.—

" Littlecote-house stands in a low and lonely situation. On three sides it is surrounded by a park that spreads over the adjoining hill; on the fourth, by meadows which are watered by the river Kennet. Close on one side of the house is a thick grove of lofty trees, along the verge of which runs one of the principal avenues to it through the park. It is an irregular building of great antiquity, and was probably erected about the time of the termination of feudal warfare, when defence came no longer to be an object in a country mansion. Many circumstances in the interior of the house,

however, seem appropriate to feudal times. The hall is very spacious, floored with stones, and lighted by large transom windows, that are clothed with casements. Its walls are hung with old military accoutrements, that have long been left a prey to rust. At one end of the hall is a range of coats of mail and helmets, and there is on every side abundance of old-fashioned pistols and guns, many of them with matchlocks. Immediately below the cornice hangs a row of leathern jerkins, made in the form of a shirt, supposed to have been worn as armour by the vassals. A large oak table, reaching nearly from one end of the room to the other, might have feasted the whole neighbourhood, and an appendage to one end of it made it answer at other times for the old game of shuffleboard. The rest of the furniture is in a suitable style, particularly an arm-chair of cumbrous workmanship, constructed of wood, curiously turned, with a high back and triangular seat, said to have been used by Judge Popham in the reign of Elizabeth. The entrance into the hall is at one end by a low door, communicating with a passage that leads from the outer door in the front of the house to a quadrangle[1] within; at the other, it opens upon a gloomy staircase, by which you ascend to the first floor, and, passing the doors of some bed-chambers, enter a narrow gallery, which extends along the back front of the house from one end to the other of it, and looks upon an old garden. This gallery is hung with portraits, chiefly in the Spa-

[1] I think there is a chapel on one side of it, but am not quite sure.

nish dresses of the sixteenth century. In one of the bed-chambers, which you pass in going towards the gallery, is a bedstead with blue furniture, which time has now made dingy and threadbare, and in the bottom of one of the bed curtains you are shewn a place where a small piece has been cut out and sown in again,—a circumstance which serves to identify the scene of the following story:—

"It was on a dark rainy night in the month of November, that an old midwife sate musing by her cottage fire-side, when on a sudden she was startled by a loud knocking at the door. On opening it she found a horseman, who told her that her assistance was required immediately by a person of rank, and that she should be handsomely rewarded, but that there were reasons for keeping the affair a strict secret, and, therefore, she must submit to be blind-folded, and to be conducted in that condition to the bed-chamber of the lady. With some hesitation the midwife consented; the horseman bound her eyes, and placed her on a pillion behind him. After proceeding in silence for many miles through rough and dirty lanes, they stopped, and the midwife was led into a house, which, from the length of her walk through the apartment, as well as the sounds about her, she discovered to be the seat of wealth and power. When the bandage was removed from her eyes, she found herself in a bed-chamber, in which were the lady on whose account she had been sent for, and a man of a haughty and ferocious aspect. The lady was delivered of a fine boy. Immediately the man commanded the midwife to give him the child, and, catching it

from her, he hurried across the room, and threw it on the back of the fire, that was blazing in the chimney. The child, however, was strong, and by its struggles rolled itself off upon the hearth, when the ruffian again seized it with fury, and, in spite of the intercession of the midwife, and the more piteous entreaties of the mother, thrust it under the grate, and, raking the live coals upon it, soon put an end to its life. The midwife, after spending some time in affording all the relief in her power to the wretched mother, was told that she must begone. Her former conductor appeared, who again bound her eyes, and conveyed her behind him to her own home; he then paid her handsomely, and departed. The midwife was strongly agitated by the horrors of the preceding night; and she immediately made a deposition of the fact before a magistrate. Two circumstances afforded hopes of detecting the house in which the crime had been committed; one was, that the midwife, as she sate by the bed-side, had, with a view to discover the place, cut out a piece of the bed-curtain, and sown it in again; the other was, that as she had descended the staircase, she had counted the steps. Some suspicions fell upon one Darrell, at that time the proprietor of Littlecote-House and the domain around it. The house was examined, and identified by the midwife, and Darrell was tried at Salisbury for the murder. By corrupting his judge, he escaped the sentence of the law; but broke his neck by a fall from his horse in hunting, in a few months after. The place where this happened is still

known by the name of Darrell's Stile,—a spot to be dreaded by the peasant whom the shades of evening have overtaken on his way.

"Littlecote-House is two miles from Hungerford, in Berkshire, through which the Bath road passes. The fact occurred in the reign of Elizabeth. All the important circumstances I have given exactly as they are told in the country; some trifles only are added, either to render the whole connected, or to increase the impression."

With this tale of terror the author has combined some circumstances of a similar legend, which was current at Edinburgh during his childhood.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the large castles of the Scottish nobles, and even the secluded hotels, like those of the French noblesse, which they possessed in Edinburgh, were sometimes the scenes of strange and mysterious transactions, a divine of singular sanctity was called up at midnight, to pray with a person at point of death. This was no unusual summons; but what followed was alarming. He was put into a sedan-chair, and, after he had been transported to a remote part of the town, the bearers insisted upon his being blindfolded. The request was enforced by a cocked pistol, and submitted to; but in the course of the discussion he conjectured, from the phrases employed by the chairmen, and from some part of their dress, not completely concealed by their cloaks, that they were greatly above the menial station they had assumed.

After many turns and windings, the chair was carried up stairs into a lodging, where his eyes were uncovered, and he was introduced into a bed-room, where he found a lady, newly delivered of an infant. He was commanded by his attendants to say such prayers by her bed-side as were fitting for a person not expected to survive a mortal disorder. He ventured to remonstrate, and observe that her safe delivery warranted better hopes. But he was sternly commanded to obey the orders first given, and with difficulty recollected himself sufficiently to acquit himself of the task imposed on him. He was then again hurried into the chair; but as they conducted him down stairs, he heard the report of a pistol. He was safely conducted home; a purse of gold was forced upon him; but he was warned, at the same time, that the least allusion to this dark transaction would cost him his life. He betook himself to rest, and, after long and broken musing, fell into a deep sleep. From this he was awakened by his servant, with the dismal news, that a fire of uncommon fury had broken out in the house of ****, near the head of the Canongate, and that it was totally consumed; with the shocking addition, that the daughter of the proprietor, a young lady eminent for beauty and accomplishments, had perished in the flames. The clergyman had his suspicions, but to have made them public would have availed nothing. He was timid; the family was of the first distinction; above all, the deed was done, and could not be amended. Time wore away, however, and with it his terrors. He became

unhappy at being the solitary depositary of this fearful mystery, and mentioned it to some of his brethren, through whom the anecdote acquired a sort of publicity. The divine, however, had been long dead, and the story in some degree forgotten, when a fire broke out again on the very same spot where the House of **** had formerly stood, and which was now occupied by buildings of an inferior description. When the flames were at their height, the tumult, which usually attends such a scene, was suddenly suspended by an unexpected apparition. A beautiful female, in a night-dress, extremely rich, but at least half a century old, appeared in the very midst of the fire, and uttered these tremendous words in her vernacular idiom: "*Anes* burned, *twice* burned; the *third* time I'll scare you all!" The belief in this story was formerly so strong, that on a fire breaking out, and seeming to approach the fatal spot, there was a good deal of anxiety testified lest the apparition should make good her denunciations.

Note XI.

As thick a smoke these hearths have given
At Hallowtide or Christmas even.—St. XXXIII. p. 259.

Such an exhortation was, in similar circumstances, actually given to his followers by a Welch chieftain:—

"Enmity did continue betweene Howell ap Rys ap Howell Vaughan and the sonnes of John ap Meredith. After the death of Evan ap Robert, Griffith ap Gronw (cozen-

german to John ap Meredith's sonnes of Gwynfryn, who had long served in France, and had charge there) comeing home to live in the countrey, it happened that a servant of his, comeing to fish in Stymllyn, his fish was taken away, and the fellow beaten by Howell ap Rys his servants; and by his commandment. Griffith ap John ap Gronw took the matter in such dudgeon that he challenged Howell ap Rys to the field, which he refusing, assembling his cosins John ap Meredith's sonnes and his friends together, assaulted Howell in his own house, after the manner he had seene in the French warres, and consumed with fire his barnes and his out-houses. Whilst he was thus assaulting the hall, which Howell ap Rys and many other people kept, being a very strong house, he was shot out of a crevice of the house, through the sight of his beaver into the head, and slayne out-right, being otherwise armed at all points. Notwithstanding his death, the assault of the house was continued with great vehemence, the doores fired with great burthens of straw; besides this, the smoake of the out-houses and barnes not farre distant annoyed greatly the defendants, for that most of them lay under boordes and benches upon the floore, in the hall, the better to avoyd the smoake. During this scene of confusion onely the old man, Howell ap Rys, never stooped, but stood valiantly in the middest of the floore, armed with a gleve in his hand, and called unto them, and bid 'them arise like men, for shame, for he had knowne there as greate a smoake in that hall

upon Christmas even.' In the end, seeing the house could noe longer defend them, being overlayed with a multitude, upon parley betweene them, Howell ap Rys was content to yeald himself prisoner to Morris ap John ap Meredith, John ap Meredith's eldest sonne, soe as he would swear unto him to bring him safe to Carnarvon Castle, to abide the triall of the law for the death of Graff' ap John ap Gronw, who was cosen-german removed to the said Howell ap Rys, and of the very same house he was of. Which Morris ap John ap Meredith undertaking, did put a guard about the said Howell of his trustiest friends and servants, who kept and defended him from the rage of his kindred, and especially of Owen ap John ap Meredith, his brother, who was very eager against him. They passed by leisure thence like a campe to Carnarvon: the whole countrie being assembled, Howell his friends posted a horseback from one place or other by the way, who brought word that he was come thither safe, for they were in great fear lest he should be murthered, and that Morris ap John ap Meredith could not be able to defend him, neither durst any of Howell's friends be there, for fear of the kindred. In the end, being delivered by Morris ap John ap Meredith to the constable of Carnarvon Castle, and there kept safely in ward untill the assises, it fell out by law, that the burning of Howell's houses, and assaulting him in his owne house, was a more haynous offence in Morris ap John ap Meredith and the rest, than the death of Gruff' ap John ap Gronw in Howell,

who did it in his own defence; whereupon Morris ap John ap Meredith, with thirty-five more, were indicted of felony, as appeareth by the copie of the indictment, which I had from the records."—Sir John Wynne's *History of the Gwydir Family, Lond.* 1770, *8vo. p.* 116.

NOTES TO CANTO SIXTH.

Note I.

O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove.—St. XXI. p. 305.

This custom among the Redesdale and Tynedale borderers is mentioned in the interesting Life of Bernard Gilpin, where some account is given of these wild districts, which it was the custom of that excellent man regularly to visit.

"This custom (of duels) still prevailed on the borders, where Saxon barbarism held its latest possession. These wild Northumbrians indeed went beyond the ferocity of their ancestors. They were not content with a duel: each contending party used to muster what adherents he could, and commence a kind of petty war. So that a private grudge would often occasion much bloodshed.

"It happened that a quarrel of this kind was on foot when Mr Gilpin was at Rothbury, in those parts. During the two or three first days of his preaching, the contending parties observed some decorum, and never appeared at church together. At length, however, they met. One party had been early at church, and just as Mr Gilpin began his sermon the

other entered. They stood not long silent: inflamed at the sight of each other, they began to clash their weapons, for they were all armed with javelins and swords, and mutually approach. Awed, however, by the sacredness of the place, the tumult in some degree ceased. Mr Gilpin proceeded: when again the combatants began to brandish their weapons, and draw towards each other. As a fray seemed near, Mr Gilpin stepped from the pulpit, went between them, and addressed the leaders, put an end to the quarrel for the present, but could not effect an entire reconciliation. They promised him, however, that till the sermon was over they would make no more disturbance. He then went again into the pulpit, and spent the rest of the time in endeavouring to make them ashamed of what they had done. His behaviour and discourse affected them so much, that, at his farther entreaty, they promised to forbear all acts of hostility while he continued in the country. And so much respected was he among them, that whoever was in fear of his enemy used to resort where Mr Gilpin was, esteeming his presence the best protection.

"One Sunday morning, coming to a church in those parts before the people were assembled, he observed a glove hanging up, and was informed by the sexton, that it was meant as a challenge to any one who should take it down. Mr Gilpin ordered the sexton to reach it him; but upon his utterly refusing to touch it, he took it down himself, and put it in his breast. When the people were assembled, he went into the pulpit, and, before he concluded his sermon,

took occasion to rebuke them severely for these inhuman challenges. 'I hear,' saith he, 'that one among you hath hanged up a glove, even in this sacred place, threatening to fight any one who taketh it down: see, I have taken it down;' and, pulling out the glove, he held it up to the congregation, and then shewed them how unsuitable such savage practices were to the profession of Christianity, using such persuasives to mutual love as he thought would most affect them."—*Life of Bernard Gilpin, Lond.* 1753, *8vo. p.* 177.

Note II.

A Horseman armed, at headlong speed.—St. XXXIII. p. 324.

This, and what follows, is taken from a real achievement of Major Robert Philipson, called from his desperate and adventurous courage, Robin the Devil. He was a loyalist during the civil wars, and held out the castle of the Earl of Derwentwater, situated upon Lord's Island in the lake of Keswick, against a considerable force commanded by Colonel Briggs, on the part of the parliament. The besiegers being obliged to retire, Philipson resolved to be revenged upon their general, and, during the time of divine service, galloped up the centre of the church at Kendal, completely armed, and discharged a pistol at his enemy's head. In turning his horse it fell upon the pavement, notwithstanding which he was able to raise the animal with the rein and spur, and rode out of the church as safely as he had enter-

ed. The anecdote is mentioned at some length in one of Mr Gilpin's tours, but I do not remember whether the object of Robin the Devil's enmity escaped, or was slain on the spot.

THE END.

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